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EDUCATION

AND THE

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BY

HORATIO W. DRESSER

Author of "The Power of Silence," "The Perfect Whole," "Voices of Freedom," "Living by the Spirit," etc.

"You shall educate me, not as you will, but as I will."—*Emerson*

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
The Knickerbocker Press
1900

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PREFACE

THE doctrine of this book is not put forward as a mere theory of education. In its pages education passes imperceptibly into life, and life becomes philosophical. Its theory is therefore rather an appeal to all that is noblest in life than a detailed educational scheme. The main thesis is that life itself is educational, that the individual possesses instincts which, if freely followed, lead the way to fullest self-expression and the service of humanity. Books, education, and experience furnish the occasion, put the soul in self-command; the soul is the consequential factor. All life should therefore be adapted with the spiritual ideal in view. Self-knowledge, self-discipline, and self-mastery are of more importance than any knowledge which the teacher can give. To these the soul should be free to add such educational opportunities as it demands. Thus to choose and thus to help, every soul, every teacher, must understand life philosophically, must dedicate his life to the Spirit. The educational ideal is thereby absorbed into the larger ideal of the spiritual life. Thus considering it, I have ventured even to include immortality as essential to this broader point of view. The value

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found in this book will accordingly depend far more upon the reader's philosophical ability and spiritual experience than upon the knowledge of conventional theories and methods of education.

It is always difficult to classify those who are on the move. But if after reading deeply in Chapters XI. and XII. the reader still persists in classifying this book, let him put it down as the work of an independent philosophical student who writes because he must. Yet the spiritual ideal for which the book was chiefly written appears least in these philosophical chapters. The deeper doctrine is stated in its most philosophical form in Chapter XIII. But the reader will be glad to turn from this more technical discussion to the chapter on immortality, in which the spiritual ideal is given its broadest and most human expression. With the exception of the last chapter, and portions of a few others, the book is wholly new, scarcely a page having appeared in print in its present form. The book occupies an independent position, and, although a logical outgrowth of them, is not to be judged by previous volumes, or by reference to any particular doctrine of which the author is thought to be an exponent. What is true, is true in its own right; and because an author reveals leanings, it does not follow that he accepts all the tenets of a sect with which he is sometimes classed.

BOSTON, July, 1900.

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EDUCATION AND THE PHILOSOPHICAL IDEAL

INTRODUCTION

Every ultimate fact is the first of a new series.—EMERSON.

IT is seldom that the general reader is treated to a more genuine surprise than in meeting for the first time a statement like the following from Emerson's essay on Plato[1]: "No power of genius has ever yet had the smallest success in explaining existence. The perfect enigma remains." These words are surprising because, until one thinks deeply, one confidently believes that the mystery of life has been solved, at least by the wise men; and when the wisest seer of our times declares that existence is still an enigma, it is naturally very startling.

Yet the wisest philosophers are the first to confess that "Here we are," and that is the utmost we can say when we undertake to settle the ultimate of ultimates. Why we exist we do not fully know. How the world came to be, we know not; we know only

[1] *Representative Men.*

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what evolution has told us concerning its later history. We have theories, but they are only theories, and a new hypothesis is no sooner propounded than fatally serious objections are raised.

We know that the universe is a law-governed system, and science has advanced wonderfully since Emerson declared life to be still enigmatical. We long ago learned that every effect has a cause, and reason assures us that anterior to all causes must be the Uncaused, since something could not have sprung from nothing. But why the Uncaused should have manifested itself—if indeed the world ever had a beginning—we do not know. All we can say is, that it is probably its nature to manifest itself. Why the Uncaused should exist with such a nature is no less a mystery. We may say it was a necessity, but that is concealing ignorance behind a word. Our sincerest statement is simply, the universe exists and we live in it. If we had a beginning, it is lost in the dim lights and shades of our obscurest dream memories, and no attempt to recall our history has thus far led to the discovery of what we most eagerly long to know.

However, we are here. It is a delight to live and to try to solve the mystery. It is endlessly amusing to listen to those who believe they have solved it, and are eager to describe God and rehearse all his motives. It is a far greater delight, having confessed our ignorance, to settle down to the wisest occupation in life, namely, to cultivate ourselves to the full, that we may learn what may be made out of life

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through the pursuit of truth, virtue, beauty, and the service of our fellowmen.

After all, it would be annoyingly prosaic to solve the mystery. It would be stultifying to become perfect, to walk the golden streets day after day and find no change. The zest of pursuit, the novelty of ever-mutative days and months and years keeps the mind perpetually young. Life can never become a burden to those who, in all the freshness and enthusiasm of healthy thought, awaken each morning to look out upon another day, eager to know what new mystery it holds. For a mind alert and active, life could not be better constituted than it is. The greater the enigma the better, if only it be so great that it can never be solved.

Life, therefore, is through and through an experiment, and we the experimenters seek to make of it what we can, always remembering that what we make to-day may be outdone or discarded by what we make to-morrow. For no one knows what man is yet to be, how he is to live, and what powers are to be his — possibly on other planets. Every ideal is relative to the condition of mind of the seer who proclaims it. What is called " the Absolute " is a pleasing conceit of speculative fancy. Forward is the only ultimate word. Every new summit is sure to reveal a novel and enticing landscape beyond.

It would seem as though we might sometime complete the circuit. Then what ? Drearily repeat it ? No, then were the universe a deceit indeed, and only a machine after all. Rather say that two

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identically similar situations never occur. The novelty, the surprise sometimes even outbalances the familiar, the known. Every circumstance is a new combination. To the end, and that means that there is no end, life for the wide-awake soul is an experiment, and at any time new factors are likely to be discovered in our problem.

This being so, it is wisdom to adjust ourselves at the beginning, and make up our minds that education will never cease. It is impossible nowadays "to prepare" for a science or profession, and thereby become masters of all that is known. Even Euclid's geometry, the authority for ages, now has a rival in the field.

Once adopted, the attitude of constant readjustment is far from unpleasant. It is a healthy state of mind, this holding of all problems in solution. It immediately lifts one above time and place and the mind grows young with the ages. It does away with all the dogmatism, conceit, intolerance, and intellectual aristocracy which have encumbered human progress. It insists upon entire democracy of spirit, and the newest experimenter is welcomed as at any time likely to upset our profoundest theories. What a reformation this attitude would make if it were universal the mind can hardly conceive, since so few have as yet attained it.

Of course the critic will immediately declare that this is a very extreme point of view, that there really is nothing new under the sun, and all this talk about readjustment is uncalled for. The disciple

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of progress is at once prepared to meet this objection by admitting that what is truest is old, and that the new always supplements and assimilates the old. But the critic's attitude is not the state of mind of the one who most keenly appreciates the spirit of his age. One would not think of going to him for instruction. Even the old must be studied in new form, and it is not the conservative who teaches that. Let us rather follow those who err on the other side, and hereafter devote more of our time to the cultivation of the spirit of progress than to the preservation of what is hoary and reverend.

If the reader accepts this point of view as applied to education, he will probably follow the clue even unto immortality. For if anything be experimental, it is the future life. This statement does not imply that the existence of a future life is in doubt, for there is abundant moral and spiritual evidence for immortality; but that each soul will enter the future as into the most enticingly novel experiment. It is only one step more to the premise that the universe itself is an experiment: it is given us by the Father to see what development it will produce in us. Not that the universe is in any sense chaotic or inharmonious. Not that its continued existence is at all uncertain, or its goodness at all problematical. So far as its law-governed, wonderfully exact, wisely adapted, and nobly beautiful system is concerned, the universe is no experiment; it is far from being an enigma. Mathematically and universally it may be depended upon to return action

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for action. But each man learns its laws experimentally, and no man as yet knows all of these. For each it is also an experiment because certain of its materials are plastic. For each it is virtually what each man's enlightenment makes it. Thus the experiment enlarges as the soul unfolds. Meanwhile the Father watches, and, watching, unifies the contributions of finite souls, not into the form of hard-and-fast fatalism, but into the plastic life which for ever makes anew for organic perfection. The eternal beauty presides over the becoming as well as over the remaining. Ever the Spirit whispers its word of promise as, pausing, it perennially passes onward, onward and upward for ever. The great secret of life is to feel that passing touch, to reveal its beauty to men. Words fail, yet suggest the indescribable. The Spirit will see to it that sometime all shall know the grandeurs and beauties, the peace and tenderness of that progressive vision.

Thus, for better or worse, our point of view is progressive, and the reader may expect it to shift even while he turns from chapter to chapter. For there is no consistency possible to the growing mind, except harmony with the inner Spirit as it wells afresh into the inspirations of the new moment. Forms come and go. Terms, methods, and systems have their day. It is the Spirit that abides, and the Spirit dwells ever in the advancing life. It may again and again declare the same message, but what it reveals to-day is of supreme worth, not what it manifested in the past. For the gospel of the past

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is true to-day only in so far as it bears the new emphasis of our time. Each day may reveal the same great laws and teach the same great lesson. But its meaning is apprehended in its fullest sense only when interpreted in the light of the new aspects which the progressive chemistry of our experiment reveals—ever crystallising, yet ever surprising the observer with new combinations.

Lest the reader fear that our point of view be founded on quicksand, let us, however, supplement what at one time threatened to be mere agnosticism by turning from the experimental or human side to a brief statement of the system by which, starting with existence as given, the universe is to be interpreted in this volume.

1. The fundamental principle is that within and behind all that comes and goes, all that appears so enigmatical but is in deepest truth the product of wisest foresight, the great All-Father exists, the supreme Spirit, eternal, omnipresent; the immanent source of all life, all power, all beings and forms, holding them, holding all experiments together as one harmonious system.

2. The second great principle is the existence of the human soul, or the real, permanent, spiritual self in each of us, differing in each, in each having some spiritual meaning as related to the contests and triumphs of our personal and social evolution.

3. The universe, visible and invisible, is the expression or embodiment of Spirit, progressively revealing itself as system, reason, beauty, unity in

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variety, activity, repose, involution and evolution, power, peace, love, wisdom, the divine fatherhood and motherhood.

4. Since Spirit is progressively revealed, human life is progressive and should be studied in the making. It is comprehensible only in the light of the advancing whole.

The soul is born in ignorance of these great facts that it may through individual experience, contrast, experiment, struggle, pain, victory over physical sensation, and triumph over selfishness, through self-knowledge, self-control, and self-help, not only learn the value of the spiritual life, but uplift its fellows, and contribute to the glory and beauty of the spiritual universe.

Thus evil springs from selfishness, which in turn is due to ignorance. Disease is disproportion, ugliness, neglect of the beautiful law of harmony which decrees that in no direction shall there be excess.

Freedom from pain, evil, and their consequences comes not merely through soundness of physical life, through self-enlightenment, self-control, and poise, but through the dedication of self in all-round adjustment to the promptings of the creative Spirit.

5. Within each of us there is a purposive instinct, a divine guidance, which, if faithfully followed, will lead into all truth. But as man is many-sided, physical, intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual, the laws of all these sides must be obeyed. Each prompting of the resident creative energy must be understood on its own plane.

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6. The great lesson of life is harmonious adjustment to the immanent Spirit, unceasingly welling up into manifestation as beauty of form and nobility of life, guiding the soul in the development of originality of thought and strength of character, through the power of love and the sense of duty.

7. The prime essential is therefore to awaken to spiritual consciousness, to knowledge of the fact that each of us is a social member of eternity in the republic of the Spirit. For as all life is in reality spiritual, and the soul is by birthright a master, all conduct should be guided by the ideals of creative activity and spiritual service. Here and now, the soul dwells in an eternal spiritual world whence it may draw wisdom, life, and power at need. Here and now, it may transcend the bondages of space and time, so that death itself shall lose its terrors, and all experiences shall be understood from the point of view of progressively higher and higher planes.

Man awakens to his full dignity as an individual soul only when thus viewing his life from the point of view of the whole, when educating himself as an eternal, universal being. He is first of all a creative agent, building as no man ever built before. Through him the great universe reproduces itself afresh, through him the All-Father beholds himself anew.

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CHAPTER I

THE NEW POINT OF VIEW

The consummate product of a world of evolution is the character that *creates* happiness, that is replete with dynamic possibilities of fresh life and activity in directions for ever new.—JOHN FISKE.

THE remarkable transition period in which we live is witnessing a noteworthy change of attitude in regard to that persistently fascinating thing which we call human life. Instead of the old complaint at the existing order of things, a complaint which uttered its dying word in Mr. Moody's last sermon, "Sin is the most real thing in the world," there is a growing belief, inspired by a sound philosophy of evolution, in the inherent goodness of man, the glorious possibility that every characteristic in man may sometime serve the Spirit. Instead of the old theory of a divine providence and a disjointed world, torn asunder by a persistently threatening adversary, we now have as a practical faith the knowledge which modern science has so long and so nobly inculcated, the knowledge that the world-process is a unit. Formerly, the crying question was, What shall we do to be saved? Now, the problem is, Granted life, how may we make it

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better? What is the meaning of life as it exists to-day, and what may it become by co-operative social and ethical activity?

Would-be reformers still unsparingly condemn the present social order, it is true, and urge upon us their artificial Utopian schemes. Many exceedingly earnest people spend their lives whetting discontent among the labouring classes. But every deeply thoughtful person now knows that all reform begins within and with the individual, and spreads, through gradual evolution, out of to-day into to-morrow. Consequently, the progressive life of our time may be said to inspire those only who voice this new belief in the unity of the cosmos and the solidarity of the race.

Although this change of attitude is already so marked in its effect upon theology and upon methods of reform, few people as yet realise its radical influence upon the details of daily life. The majority know only that the old order is disappearing and that a new is coming, ushering in changes so great that no one is far-sighted enough to prophesy the result. It is well, then, before we consider the specific problems of this book, to examine this reformation in detail—that is, so far as we are able to detect its scope and meaning.

Many causes are assignable for the growth of this new spirit. Some would no doubt attribute it to the spreading of what may be called the new democracy. In a sense, it is the direct outgrowth of the principles of liberty and equality on which

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the American republic is founded. But, undoubtedly, the one factor without which all this development would have been impossible, is the rise and wide-spread acceptance of the doctrine of evolution. Many secondary causes have played their part, but it was the contributions of Darwin, Wallace, Spencer, and their immediate predecessors and followers in the scientific world, which furnished the new background on which these other issues could be displayed to advantage.

Philosophy had long ago prepared the way for belief in the unity of the world-process: it was modern science which supplied the evidence or proof, by showing that all forces are so many diverse forms of one ultimate energy. The evidence once at hand, philosophers could place it in its true light, could carry out their doctrine more in detail; and, beginning where science paused, show what this one energy is, how the whole great scheme of divine self-manifestation is realised in the wonderful processes which science had so graphically described.

The cosmic process accepted as a unit, the second great advance was made through the discovery of the evolutionary origin of evil. What had before been either an absolute mystery, or the subject to which theology claimed exclusive right, now began to be very clear and to become generally understood. For when man's kinship with and indebtedness to the lower animals was established, it at once became evident whence came those tendencies and

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powers which had heretofore been deemed the outgrowths and penalties of original sin.

The origin of evil accounted for, it was an easy step to the conclusion that, if the race is a unit, making for perfection, every faculty and power of man may be turned to good. Therefore, instead of condemning man's lower nature and calling it "bad," it henceforth became simply the lower as contrasted with the higher, not in itself evil, but simply undeveloped. Thus was swept away the very foundation on which the entire orthodox theological structure rested. And although many people do not yet realise it, there was not the slightest reason left for belief in either the fall of man or a propitiatory saviour.

Thus Jehovah was left without an occupation. His office of miraculous creator had been taken from him by the discovery that the universe is eternal, and all new genera and species the product of untold ages of evolution. And now he was deprived of his right not only as an interfering providence, but as an angry father whose son must be slain in order to assuage the terrible power of his burning wrath.

But what a marvellously warm, loving, tender substitute modern science, with the help of philosophy, has provided! Life is now known to be a unit because all its processes and forces reveal one immanent, omnipresent Spirit, ever manifesting wisdom, love, power, through the infinitely beautiful system in which he perpetually resides. It is safe to say that never in the history of thought has

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any revelation equalled in depth and grandeur this discovery of the immanent God, whose presence modern science has declared. Few people in our day will realise the stupendous importance of this great revelation.

It has followed as a natural consequence of these new beliefs that, as the old pessimism disappeared and a sound meliorism took its place, all emphasis should be placed on the good, the ideal, or positive side, that the constructive spirit should displace the old intolerance and despair. The new attitude towards the world means implicit faith in the world, belief in men, hope for every darksome problem and for every crying issue. Hence our modern philanthropy, and the better part of what is called socialism, is the logical consequence of this determination to help man, instead of trying to save him (in case he chooses to accept your creed). The larger sympathy of the age very beautifully voices this faith in the integrity of the race, and the earnest zeal which once spent itself in anxious prayers for the lost has now become the practical endeavour which prompts the new democracy.

There are social problems enough to be solved to employ all the energy of these earnest men and women who are trying to make life better. There is even more demand for conscientious zeal, for we now know the magnitude of our problem. But we also know the law which governs all reform, and so we can calmly and patiently adjust ourselves in conformity with the methods of evolution.

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Again, there is boundless inspiration in the modern belief in the dignity and worth of the individual. This faith in the right of every human soul to exist is an indissoluble part of the new belief in society as a democratic organism. We all know nowadays that, however the social problem is solved, it must take equal account of the individual as such and the individual as member of a social whole. Each man must have every possible opportunity to make what he can of himself, yet each is expected to contribute his share to the general development. Thus the individual is not the pitiable personage who might possibly have a chance under the old *régime* in case his sins were forgiven. He has the right to hold his head up and be a man in his own sphere. He is regarded as through and through free,—that is, potentially,—and as capable of mastering any unfavourable circumstance in which he may be placed.

This belief in individual freedom is, of course, much older than the modern doctrine of evolution. It began far back in the Middle Ages when the doctrines of Abelard, and others who believed in the rights of individual reason, spread in France and Italy; and, combining with the spirit of the Renaissance, prepared the way for the Protestant Reformation. Without this great movement and the reform instituted by Martin Luther and his contemporaries, the great scientific development of our century would have been impossible. For it was not until man was free to think for himself that the remarkable

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reaction from theology changed the balance of power from the authority of the Church to the authority of natural law. Yet it was not until this individualistic growth began to take the particular shape which Darwin and Spencer gave it that the change of attitude became complete.

He who understands the new point of view must follow the guidance of the historical spirit, for the change is intelligible only in the light of all the causes which produced it, although coming to a climax with the acceptance of the doctrine of evolution. And he who would intelligently choose his place in this great modern movement must take into account these its many sides, already briefly suggested. The new movement is both a new individualism and a new democracy, an entirely different idea of God and salvation, and a thoroughly altered conception of the oneness of life. The reaction began not only with the revolt of reason, but with the struggle between the popes and the states for supremacy. The ancient theological hierarchy was gradually overthrown, and the impetus then given did not cease until the world became not a papal but a secular unit, not a theological but a scientific scheme. And now, in these modern days, when everyone is becoming free in all respects, we look back upon the impressive ages wherein man struggled for the freedom we now enjoy, with profound satisfaction that at last we are unifying in one great system of evolutionary idealism all that was noble, all that was sacred, all that was true, in each

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of these branches of knowledge which separated themselves from the parent theological unity.

Thus the new point of view is synthetic in a sense which no one will fully appreciate until society shall have advanced a few stages further. Then mankind will awaken to knowledge of the fact that there is a profound harmony not only between the processes of natural evolution, the activities of individual and social life, but between all these phases of development and that which we call the spiritual, that in reality the entire process is spiritual. Until then there is every reason to specialise in each of these departments, so that physical, individual, ethical, social, and religious evolution may be carried to the full, unconsciously contributing — while seeming to be struggling for separate existence—to the coming unity in the higher social state of the Spirit, in which all hostile differences shall be dissolved.

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CHAPTER II

EDUCATIONAL IDEALS

Education consists in leading man, as a thinking, intelligent being, growing into self-consciousness, to a pure and unsullied, conscious, and free representation of the inner law of divine unity.—FROEBEL.

WITH every new discovery made by the human mind a need is felt for the reconstruction of our terminology and the rewriting of our text-books. The great discoveries of Galileo, Copernicus, and Newton, of Columbus and the navigators who succeeded him, are instances in point. This was pre-eminently the case with the publication and wide-spread acceptance of the doctrine of evolution whose profound influence we have considered in the foregoing chapter. Indeed, the acceptance of this doctrine meant so much that histories, scientific works, and philosophical text-books written previous to the development of the new historical spirit are almost of no value except as curiosities. And the time will come when every treatise on theology or religion will be out of date unless it be rewritten in the light of the latest researches in comparative religion and the higher or historical criticism.

In these modern days of unprecedented interest

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and development, when new discoveries are made more rapidly than even the scholar can take cognisance of them, there is special need for the reconstruction of all theories of education. Many important discoveries have been made of which education has not taken proper account. This is due to the fact that the world in general has not given these discoveries the recognition which they deserve, and because education is still largely in subjection to influences which have not yet responded to the most advanced thought of our time.

I refer not merely to the contributions of evolution, as already considered, but to discoveries in regard to the higher or spiritual nature of man, studies which, because of their deep significance, demand a reformation in many of our standards. Historically speaking, these discoveries, like those of scientific evolutionists, are not wholly new. They date far back to ancient India; they were made and remade in Palestine; there have been seers in all ages and in all civilised lands who understood their transcendent importance. But it has remained for our own age to realise the practical value of these great revelations, and to place them on a basis where, in connection with the philosophy of evolution, they may become potent factors in all future education.

What these discoveries are we shall consider from chapter to chapter, since they will appear in our discussion in their proper places as practical factors in daily life. Suffice it at this point that in general

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they relate to the soul as the highest centre of all evolution, the home of individuality and the fundamental reality in all thought, our life in mind, our closest communion with each other. These discoveries therefore bear an intimate relation to the great doctrine of the immanent Spirit. They are candidates for a yet higher point of view than that of mere evolution, namely, the attempt to trace evolution to its source in that spiritual involution which is the very life and cause of the stupendous variety of the visible world.

From the point of view of the soul, studied in relation to the immanent Spirit, the chief function of life is spiritual creativeness. The soul is part and parcel of the process of creation. It is potentially master of forces and tendencies which, seen from the lower point of view, limit and imprison us on every side. Its function is therefore in marked contrast to the part assigned it by conventional education.

Current education exists largely for the training of the intellect. The standards are intellectual, the methods are the results of ages of intellectual evolution. Without these methods our universities could not exist. Surely no one who understands the human mind doubts the wisdom of this. We must have training, discipline, accuracy, system, if we are to have education in the highest sense. Nature is a system. Human society is a law-governed organism. The entire universe is regulated by law. We must therefore have trained minds to interpret

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that law. There is nothing more deplorable in certain kinds of so-called spiritual doctrine than vagueness, mysticism, disloyalty to fact. We need more and more those who appreciate what a fact is, who know how to state it, free from the preconceptions, prejudices, and inclinations which so often warp and distort. One of the greatest needs of this or any age is the thinker, he who understands the laws of the universe as revealed in history, in nature, and in human society; who is capable of working out life's problems, aided but not hampered by books and men.

Yet, when all this has been said, there remains the danger, and it has always been a threatening one, that the higher nature may be crowded out by the intellect. By the higher nature I mean our finest feelings, our intuitions, insights, inspirations, spiritual faculties, the love of all that is noblest, and the contemplative life, or worship, of the soul. Every mind in which the scientific interest is strong, and the higher nature strong, too, finds it necessary to be watchful lest analysis intrude on the sacred domain of insight, and, rudely treading there, declare that there is no holy ground which science shall not call her own.

I venture to lay down the proposition that education can fulfil its highest purpose only by promoting to the front rank this same neglected higher nature, by insisting that spirit shall be first and form secondary, that the inspirations of the intuitive faculty are our most important sources of knowledge, our surest

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guides to truth. The reasons for affirming this proposition will become clear by a consideration of the aims and possibilities of education.

Since education is to fit man to live,—that is, to train him to be an all-round being, not merely practical but beautiful, not only individual but social, a thinker, a worker, and a master,—its true basis is practical knowledge of the art of life; it must not be separated from life. And life in its fullest sense is not merely physical and intellectual, but spiritual; it springs from the invisible Reality or Spirit behind all evolution, and is complete only through the realisation of the spiritual ideal.

Without stopping at this point to examine the reasons for this statement, and without attempting to justify the adoption of the criterion of spiritual creativeness as the supreme test, let us simply enounce it as the broadest ideal, that the aim of education is the creative expression of the God or Spirit in us through individuality. If life is ultimately spiritual, if it manifests the Spirit, it is this ideal which alone gives to education the central principle, the unity which it must possess in order to be consistently progressive from infancy to so-called old age. Fundamentally speaking, the development of the spiritual individual must ever be of more consequence than the development of the scholar or the training of the merchant. For the scholar is essentially the man of learning, the merchant is merely practical, while the spiritual individual is the *man of life* in its fullest, broadest

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sense; he who not only teaches men how to think, and how to earn their daily bread, but who shows them how to find and to manifest that Spirit to whose living presence we owe all that we are.

Thus broadly considered, education is the art of expression, the expression of the highest that is in us through all-sided development. Its ends are: to teach men the laws of the universe, both visible and invisible; to teach men how to reason; to show them how to meet the strenuous life; to make clear the supremacy of the soul over circumstance; to attain the highest ideals of art, poetry, music, beauty; and, highest of all, to develop sympathy, to teach unselfishness, the value and power of service. The educated man is he who is best fitted to serve his fellows, he who dedicates his life to the highest ideals of brotherhood.

All these ideals are fundamentally traceable to the great fact that each soul is a unique individual, a fresh experiment. Each bears a personal relation to the Father. Each has its particular message from God to man. Each has its own problem to solve.

Consequently, the history of the individual liberty for which our ancestors so long struggled is the record of the soul's evolution inspired by this divine ideal. The freedom of the soul is attained as rapidly as the conditions of natural, social, and intellectual evolution permit, until that time when, conscious of its real part in life, the soul begins to command its own circumstances. The individual

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consciousness, understood, furnishes the data for the solution of the particular educational problem, and therefore gives the opportunity for the expression of the particular divine message. The entire individual experience, from the dawn of self-consciousness through the school and college years, business and social life, the struggles with self, and the problems of the home, of marriage, and of one's life-work, is the education of the soul, the contest of the soul in its search for freedom and perfection. All the trials and tribulations, the obstacles and hardships, the struggle for health and the earnest endeavours for success, are parts of one spiritual process which includes every day and hour of life. There is nothing which is not educational. To him who understands its laws, every experience, small or great, is an opportunity for the triumph of the soul.

I do not mean that this ideal is necessarily to be talked about from the start,—it cannot in its full sense be explained to the child; for it is profound, all-inclusive, universal, and is to be fully grasped only after much thought and experience,—but that it is to be the implied ideal in every day and hour of the teacher's life, in the attitude of everyone not merely toward the child, but toward the man. In the home and in the schoolroom, it should matter more whether love rules, whether there is patience and mutual helpfulness, than whether mere learning is acquired. All learning is to be subordinate to the learner, all vocations are to be subordinate to the man. First we must have men of

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character, pure, strong, and true. And this ideal must never be lost sight of; we must never forget that we are primarily dealing with souls.

" Man, whatever else he may be," says Professor James, in his admirable book, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology: and to Students on some of Life's Ideals*,[1] " is primarily a practical being, whose mind is given him to aid in adapting him to this world's life." Taking account, then, of the fact that " conduct is three fourths of life," man's spiritual education must aim first of all at the production of men and women of action, those who, instead of leading a life of good intentions, show by what they do that they really believe in the Spirit. For our ideal is not the production of dreamers, vague theorisers, and visionary skeletons. It means that man shall not be less but more practical than the common-sense men of affairs of our time. It means the elevation of conduct to its true place,—that is, it must spring from the highest centre within.

For it is clear that education is incomplete unless it enables a man to meet all the practical demands of life. Education means not merely self-expression, but self-knowledge, and the progressive application of this knowledge to conduct. The educated man is the man of resources, and we propose to add to these. The educated man is he whose trained mind, his ready perceptions, and his repose, enable him to adapt himself to any situation in life, whether in relation to nature, to society, or

[1] New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1899.

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the struggles of his own interior evolution. He is the man who understands and controls his forces. And this means everything, from physical impulse to spiritual inspiration.

We must reiterate and emphasise the fact that education is for the whole of life. It is to prepare one to live in the fullest, noblest sense. The desideratum is the evolution of the ideal man,—the man of power, physically strong, intellectually masterful, morally sound, and socially complete. He is to represent the universe from an individual point of view. He is to seize upon some aspect of life and express it as no man has expressed it before—to write about it, to paint it, to understand its laws, reveal its beauty, or turn it to practical account for the benefit of humanity.

It is evident that an entire philosophy of human nature and the universe is involved in this educational ideal. We must understand the philosophy before we can intelligently apply the ideal.

What is the central purpose of life, so far as our limited knowledge permits us to define it? From the divine point of view, it is evidently the manifestation through evolution, order and degree, genus and species, in one universe or system, of power, form, beauty, life, love. There are as many distinct ideals as there are kinds of beings and things in the world of evolution. There are ideals of physical organisation and form, ideals of mental life and character. Man, the epitome of all beings, evidently stands in a measure for all these ideals,

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although many physical ideals attain a higher degree of perfection among the lower animals. Yet he is, without doubt, to be judged by the highest that is in him, always reserving a large sphere for future ideals and possibilities as yet unknown to the wisest of men.

If man is an immortal spirit, he is to be truly understood only from the point of view of his eternally progressive soul-life. It is not primarily for the body that he lives, not as a financier or statesman that he is to be permanently known, but as a soul.

That this is not yet fully the ideal even of the new education is evident from the fact that so much stress is still laid on mere acquirement. But, if this high ideal is to be realised, soul-knowledge must be held in greater esteem than knowledge of books. This is a familiar thought to exponents of the new education. But I mean far more than is ordinarily understood by self- or soul-knowledge.

The term "self," as used in the psychologies and treatises on education now in vogue, refers to the mind in its association with the brain; that is, as feeling, thought, will. It is a sort of abstract self, and is studied apart from the vital problems of daily living.

The larger knowledge of self of which I speak grows out of concrete experience, contests with ill-health, sorrow, and suffering. It includes the results of psychical research, the therapeutic value of thought, the power of hope, and a practical idealistic

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philosophy. It gives great prominence to the study and development of the subconscious mind as a potent factor in spiritual education, and, as already suggested, is deeply concerned with the soul as a creative agent, an inspired organ of the divine nature, likely to improve upon even the highest ideals of present-day existence.

In order to pursue the educational ideal from this point of view, there must obviously be a radical reform in our school system. If poise, soul-culture, and spiritual service are of supreme worth, we must put an end to all forcing, rushing, and cramming. There must be moderation, equanimity in all things. There must be times for silence, meditation, and inner rest. The daily life must be so arranged that there shall be opportunity for the spontaneous deliverances of the subconscious mind. That which profits the soul must be held in higher repute than that which stimulates the proud intellect or adds money to one's purse.

Obviously, too, the teacher must add a new acquirement. He must set the example of spiritual repose, self-control, and patience. He must teach more by what he is than by what he says. He should inspire in his pupils a love for that which does not perish. To do this, he must have time; and, in order to have time, he must have fewer subjects to teach. This means that the pressure system, under which the boy is compelled to prepare on a certain number of subjects in a given length of time, must give way to ideals of beauty and art, which

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insist first of all that everything shall be done well, that one's work shall be a finished performance.

This educational method, of course, means that the reform must begin at the root of American nervousness and rush. Equanimity must become hereditary. Children must be born on a higher plane, from spiritual rather than from physical motives. Our boys and girls must be better equipped from the start, and from infancy to maturity be instructed in accordance with the spiritual ideal.

The higher education, therefore, begins long before the birth of the child. The parents must first rid the mind of the old theology, the old fear and pessimism, then devote their lives to the new ideals now so widely accepted, which we have considered in the foregoing chapter: the belief in the inherent goodness of men, salvation through character, and also the ideal of the attainment of perfect health through beauty of thought, righteousness of life, and spiritual self-understanding.

Prenatal influence, therefore, has much to do with the future education of the child. The mother should live as far as possible in an atmosphere of idealism, of hope, of practical optimism. Her thoughts should be centred upon the broadly inclusive spiritual ideal. Her home should be the meeting-place of all that is ennobling. It should be a house of peace, of moderation, of love, so that the strongest desire implanted upon the growing organism shall be for the fruits of the Spirit. If the child is brought forth in love, not in passion, in

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peace, not in excitement, its education will proceed far more easily; and in due time it will attain a high level in its contests with conventional life.

Spiritual education is, therefore, universal education. It applies to every detail, to every plane of life. It fits man to adjust himself to and understand the entire universe, to become truly universal. Current education falls short of this because its ideals are not high enough, because it has not yet made use of the recent discoveries concerning the subconscious mind, prenatal influence, and the power of thought on the body.

That the reformation of our educational methods is a difficult task is at once admitted. Much prejudice will be encountered, and conventionality will assert its might. It will be some time yet before there are teachers competent to teach this highest education. But simply to formulate the ideal is to make a beginning. The ideal will grow in power each time it is considered, and in due course we shall have schools specially adapted for the training of those who are to inculcate the spiritual ideal.

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CHAPTER III

EQUANIMITY

When everything is in its right place within us, we ourselves are in equilibrium with the whole work of God.—AMIEL'S JOURNAL.

A FEW years ago the president of a Western college for women had occasion to visit the women's colleges in the East, notably Bryn Mawr, Vassar, and Smith, and to make a comparative study of the young women in these colleges. The natural supposition was that the health of the New England young women was superior to that of the Pennsylvania students. But, to her surprise, the observer found that the Pennsylvania young women were generally healthier and stronger. Further inquiry revealed the fact that a large percentage of the students in Bryn Mawr at that time were Quakers, or of Quaker descent. Here, then, was the reason. The serene life of the Friends resulted in greater health than the more robust life of "bleak New England." No better argument could be found in favour of serenity.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure"; and the question arises, Is it not better, on the whole, to live that kind of life which makes disease impossible than to spend one's substance on

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drugs and doctors? If so, let us follow out this great thought as essential to our ideal of many-sided, therefore of sound education, and as an illustration of some of the discoveries concerning the inner life of man which we have considered in the foregoing chapter. For we have laid it down as a prime essential of the spiritual ideal in education that its exponents shall possess equanimity, or inner poise.

In the case of the Friends the results are doubtless largely spontaneous. It is the habit of their life to wait in silence, and they already possess as an hereditary virtue that which so many are now seeking self-consciously. Is it possible to combine the serenity of the Friends with the heightened activity of a disciple of scientific evolution and the zealous seeker after more and more spiritual truth?

Let us first regard the problem from the lower point of view. What is the physiology of poise? Careful scientific investigation[1] has revealed the interesting fact that the functions of the body are maintained through rhythmic action. If this rhythm be interfered with, of course the normal functioning of the organs is disturbed. Anything which disturbs the sympathetic nervous system is likely to affect this natural rhythm. For example, violent emotion quickens the rhythmic action of the heart. Anger causes the capillaries to contract. Fear reaches the very extremities.

[1] See *The Abdominal Brain*, by Byron Robinson. Clinic Publishing Co., Chicago.

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In general terms, any emotional excess tends to disturb the functions of the body. Passion leads naturally to the development of superfluous heat, which must be thrown off through the general system. An excessive amount of food put into the stomach of course disturbs the natural rhythm of that organ. Excessive stirrings of the sex nature are likely to result in disturbances of the throat or in undue heating of the eyes and brain. The results usually bear specific names, and the victim, ignorant of the cause, supposes that he has caught an external disease.

It is obvious that many diseases are directly traceable to excess, to an abnormal amount of heat, overeating, and the almost innumerable excesses which spring from nervous hurry and tension. If man really wishes to put himself in a thoroughly sound condition, he must strike at the heart of all these difficulties by adopting as his absolute rule, *Nothing to excess.*

Yet physical excess is only one phase of the subject. In order to understand the power of equanimity as a source of health, we must inquire more deeply into the nature of disease.

In the past, man has been accustomed to regard disease as something which seized him from outside, whatever his inner condition. It has also been believed that medicine could of itself cure, even prevent, nearly all diseases; despite the obvious fact that, so far as illness is due to excess, its permanent cure is moderation and equanimity. But in these

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days of more sensitively organised men and women medicine has repeatedly failed, and man has begun to think and to discover that disease is a disturbance from within, and that if the organism is in good condition he need not fear disease. Thus wisdom has been brought more and more into play, and displaced drugs. For more depends on the way a man conducts himself, upon his regulation of the forces within him, than upon any external condition by which he can possibly be surrounded.

Thus when wisdom began to accomplish what drugs could not, man became sufficiently alive to his necessities to investigate the whole subject of the influence of mind upon the bodily organism. The question flashed over his mind, What is the greatest power in man, the physical, the intellectual, or the spiritual? Why is it that the mother's love sometimes comes to the rescue and saves her child, when the doctor declares that the child must die? Why do people rise up and declare that they "*will* get well," when there is apparently no hope? Why do the fearless sometimes go where contagious diseases are rampant, and come away unharmed? And why are superstitious people healed by faith in sacred relics?[1] Surely, there is a principle here; and that which is wrought unconsciously might be accomplished consciously by one who understands the laws of mind—so man has reasoned.

[1] For the detailed account of such instances, see *The Influence of the Mind on the Body*, by D. H. Tuke, M.D. Philadelphia: H. C. Lea, 1884.

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Following out this line of reasoning, if we consult the ablest physicians of the day, we are told that many kinds of disease are simulated and communicated by fear, even when there are no physical conditions to give rise to the disease. We are informed that fear can not only kill, but cure (in cases where nothing short of a fright will arouse a person); that many cures are wrought by medicines which have no virtue whatever, bearing Latin names, and given because the patient demanded something; that faith in the physician oftentimes has more to do with a cure than any kind of treatment the doctor can administer; in fine, that the mind has far more influence in the cause and cure of disease than any physician has yet been able to discover.

Have we not been mistaken, then, in attributing so much power to germs, contagious atmospheres, medicines, and physical conditions? What is it in us which feels all our conditions, thinks about them, brings its beliefs and fears into play, anxiously awaits the doctor's verdict, is swayed this way and that according as faith wavers or hope enters? Is it not the mind? And what thinks, wills, and acts through the mind, compelling it to change its beliefs, to cast off fear and the bondage of physical sensation, declaring that it will be well? It is the soul, the invisible man, the real power behind the throne—in the majority of men still the slave to its own subjects.

Surely, these physical features are not the man. It is not the body which feels. The soul expresses

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itself through the body by means of the mind, or consciousness. It is the soul that acts, compelling the body to respond. It is the soul that possesses the intelligence. And the soul can be complete master of its states of consciousness, and through them master of the body.

In order, then, to understand the effect of the mind upon the body, we must remember that the soul has the power to set the physical forces in motion, and either to keep them in equilibrium or start them into unwonted activity. One can, for example, arouse one's self from reverie, and instantly start the body in rapid motion toward the door and out over the fields at full speed. It is a mental decision, resulting in volition and heightened brain activity, which brings about this sudden change.

Again, suppose one hears the news of a terrible accident in which a dear friend may have been killed. The mind is at once thrown into a fever of excitement, followed by an emotional state which rapidly extends throughout the body, increases the beating of the heart, changes the facial expression, quickens the circulation, and causes a strained condition of the nerves from which, unless one knows how to avoid it, there is likely to be a nervous reaction.

The instantaneous effect of anger illustrates still more forcibly the power of mind to translate its emotions into physical changes. The rapid physical response—the reddened face, the contracted muscles, the clenched fists, and the blow which

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follows, all result from the remarkable little thought which swiftly gives its assent to the angry impulse. The whole organism must pay the penalty of that decisive word.

Physiology assures us that with the slightest increase in the intensity of our emotions there is a rush of blood to the head. Recent experiments show that there is a change in the amount of blood flowing to the brain whenever the mind turns in a more active direction. Simply to turn from a book in one's native tongue to the more difficult reading of an unfamiliar passage in a foreign language—for example, a passage in Homer—is sufficient to cause this heightened blood-flow.[1] If we were able to observe the effects, we should probably discover a response in the entire organism in proportion as the mental state varies from a mere passing thought to a violent emotion, such as great anger or sudden fright.

But it is well to repeat and emphasise what is a familiar thought nowadays,—that the emotional response is equally effective in the opposite direction. As surely as hate contracts and depression draws one into self, so surely does love expand, while hope lifts one above trouble. Everyone knows the effect of the encouragement, good cheer, and love which the buoyant friend brings into a room where depression reigns. A healthy, energetic, optimistic mind strikes the keynote for an entire company. The

[1] *Fear*, Angelo Mosso, translated by E. Lough. Longmans, Green & Co., 1896.

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influence of an unsympathetic or hostile mind is very quickly perceived, even when there is strong unison of thought among all others who are present. Thus one might go on, accumulating fact after fact, to show that the mind not only exerts a powerful influence on the body, but on its fellow-minds, not merely in regard to health and disease, but in all departments of human relationship. And we shall see that the spiritual atmosphere created by the mother and the teacher is one of the most potent factors in education.

The mind need not be swayed by emotion and passion, it need not be the slave of fear or of physical sensation, if the soul comes to consciousness of its power, and turns the thought into another channel. He who possesses sufficient self-control may stop these trouble-bearing thoughts before they go forth to action. He can cultivate those states of mind which invite health, happiness, and peace. He may make hope a fine art, trust a habit, and love a boon companion. And so, little by little, the soul may not only master the mind, but with equal success extend its dominion to all parts of the body and keep it in perfect health or equilibrium.

Much of this may sound vague and impossible at first. But put it to the test. Observe yourself; and when fears, violent emotions, and painful sensations arise, pause for a moment, gather your forces, quiet the mind, and compel the rising activities to subside.

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If an angry, excited man were to rush up to you, urging you to join him in a venturesome undertaking, you would say: "Let us be calm. Let us quietly reason together." Proceed in the same way with yourself. First find the quiet centre within, then calmly reason. Do not permit your mind to dwell upon the painful, the unpleasant, the selfish thought. Let the higher self (the Christ) command the lower self: "Peace, be still!" "I and my Father are one," the higher self says. Think of that. Live in that. Rise above all that is distressing, in the strength and confidence of the Spirit, the greatest power in the world, the conqueror of the flesh, the master of the mind.

By this time, the reader is ready to leap to the conclusion that we are advocating a merely mental theory of health and healing. Not at all. We are contending for a recognition of both the physical and mental factors, for a sound mind in a sound body, a mind which draws upon its own resources and acquires mastery over the body. It is only in this broad sense that the problem of health becomes part of philosophical education, namely, through the lessons which pain may teach as a factor in self-development and harmonious self-expression.

Take a test case. Two persons take a bicycle ride and become very much heated. They sit down to rest, and one of them "takes cold"; the other experiences no inconvenience, although he lies down upon the ground. The mental healer, defining disease as an "error of mind," declares that one

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" believed " in taking cold, the other did not. Let us compare the lives of these two people.

One has lived the conventional life, and has regarded disease as something which everyone is likely to " catch." Consequently, he has had little ventilation in his room at night, has been afraid of draughts of air, afraid of the dampness in the air and the ground, afraid to go out in winter without an overcoat or in summer without a hat, and so on—the enumeration would fill pages. When winter underclothing has once been put on, he has not dared to take it off until late in May. He has taken medicine " to purify his blood." And he has always gratified his senses.

The other has lived a natural life, has been much in the open air, and is at home in all kinds of weather. He enjoys an east wind. He is relaxed and happy on a hot day. His windows are wide open at night, in summer, fall, spring, and winter. He can change from thick to thin underclothing in midwinter without inconvenience. He wears an overcoat or not as he chooses. He eats pure food when he is hungry, and enjoys it; has never taken medicine; does not smoke or drink; he leads a pure life.

Now is it the belief or the mode of life which is responsible for the immunity from disease in the one case and the constant slavery to it in the other? If the conventional man becomes a convert to the mental-healing doctrine to-day, will he escape all disease to-morrow? Or does his belief profit him

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in so far as, year by year, he acquires the habits of the man who is in harmony with nature ?

To be sure, a man must change his belief in order to conquer disease. But what is the decisive factor, day by day, and year by year, the belief or the mode of physical and mental life ?

Habitual disbelief in disease may have something to do with the immunity from it on the part of the bicyclist who does not take cold. But is it not his well-ordered life which constitutes his real freedom ?

It seems strange that man has so long delayed the discovery that it is his life, his state of development, that causes disease, that disease is disturbed rhythm. But the case is perfectly plain. The natural rhythm of all the functions is maintained only when the body is kept in equilibrium. The slightest variation from the normal in any part is likely to affect the rhythm of the whole. The result is accurately determined by the disturbing cause.

The equilibrium of the body is maintained through the equilibrium of the emotions, through equanimity, and through the proper care and development of the body. Man must control both his mind and his body if he wishes to be sound. The only way to keep the mind habitually even is by living a poised life. Poise is thus the keynote of all the harmonies of the body. This is the price which Nature demands of man; and if he is unwilling to pay it, he must suffer. If he habitually pays it, he may acquire perfect health.

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Whenever the equilibrium of the body is disturbed, there is one sovereign remedy; namely, to seek poise, then let Nature restore harmony. There is seldom need of doctors, there is no need of medicine after man has discovered his own resources. It is foolish to fear. Nature is competent. But one must meet her inexorable demands.

If you are nervously wrought up, settle down, quietly, peacefully, restfully. Do not wholly "let go." That is an extreme. Discover the central point between passivity and activity; namely, poised co-operation.

If there is violent disturbance of the body, take complete rest, soothe the mind, quiet the nerves, banish all fear, and give the disturbance full opportunity to subside. Remember that the disturbance originated in your own body, and that the resident forces of the body are able to restore you, if you maintain equanimity.

Here is an illustration from actual experience, the facts of which I can vouch for. "A number of years ago," my informant tells me, "I suffered a very acute pain for thirty-six hours. The pain was so acute that I could not hasten the process, and no mechanical means brought me any relief. My friends, unaware of my inner resources, thought I was about to die. But I had absolutely no fear. I was confident that I could weather the gale. Accordingly, I maintained my poise, an even, steady attitude of trust and peace. In due time Nature carried off the obstruction, and I lost consciousness in sleep."

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Is it possible to estimate the good that could be done by extending to humanity this priceless power of consciously maintaining poise, this trust in Nature, and this freedom from fear? Even the surgeon might be dispensed with in certain cases. An instance from my own life is at point.

About fifteen years ago I fell heavily upon the floor. I experienced no pain at the time; but a swelling appeared on the right leg, and I was lame for several months. All attempts to remove the obstruction by mental means were futile. On the contrary, the pain increased until I was compelled to give up all exercise. In due time an opening appeared near the knee; after a few weeks a sliver of bone, about two inches in length, was cast out, and the organism at once recovered. This was a year after the accident. It had required all that time to perform Nature's work. There was nothing to do but wait, and assuage the pain by an attitude of trust and poise.

But the chief purpose of this chapter is to emphasise the value of poise as a preventive. If equanimity is a habit of life, if the life is pure, if no medicines, impure foods, or stimulants are put into the body, the physical organism is lifted to the plane where disease is impossible. There must be a physical correspondence to the purity of mind. Merely to think healthful thoughts is not sufficient. The body must be controlled through and through. The life must be moderate in every particular, moderation in eating, moderation in physical work,

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moderation in mental work, in social life, in every department of daily activity.

All these departments need special consideration. In one direction after another one must study the natural impulses until the habit or activity in question has been mastered and brought into subjection to the headquarters of poise in the centralised soul.

To rule means first to understand. In order to understand, one must investigate in detail. And probably the best method is the analysis of some excess. Therefore trace your physical excesses back to their origin until, by overcoming the cause, you at last conquer the effect.

No one rules his body who lacks poise. And poise in a general way is, as I have shown, the centralised result of varied endeavours to understand and control. No one rules the body who eats too much, who eats rapidly, who uses intoxicants, tobacco, or drugs, who is the victim of any kind of sexual excess, who has disease or vice in any form—the list is too long to print.

The total problem, then, is this. It matters little what are your abstract affirmations, what your religion is, or what you profess to believe but do not practise. The vital consideration is, What use are you making of your forces? Undoubtedly, each of us is the recipient of a certain amount of force, a stream of power playing persistently upon us. If we are perfectly adjusted, the sum-total of force produces a sum-total of harmony. If any obstruc-

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tion enters, there is discord somewhere. If poise is lacking in any degree, there is waste of force.

The problem is simply the economy of force. It is like the problem of the mechanic, or the electrician: how to avoid the enormous waste of mechanical power. No man has fully solved the problem in his own life in whom there is waste of force. Man must learn how, in every particular, to spend his power to the best advantage.

Affirmations and ideals are the merest steps in the right direction: it is work that tells. Stop yourself while you work, and make a study of your particular occupation, that you may attain poise in that direction.

Observe the successful woodsman: he pauses or rests between each blow of the axe, he chops rhythmically; whereas the untrained man follows one blow with another in nervous succession.

It is more fatiguing for a tall man to walk slowly with one who takes short steps than to walk thrice as many miles at his natural rhythmic gait. In all kinds of work there are natural temperamental limits within which one can do an enormous amount of work with a minimum expenditure of energy. The secret of work with the minimum degree of fatigue is poised rhythmic action through economy of nerve force.

This is a vitally important point for every student, for every teacher, for every parent. Each must learn in his own way the great secret of economic work.

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This is the secret of all life.

This is Nature's line of least resistance, the secret of her marvellous power. For Nature works, not by fits and starts, not through excess or haste, but through patient evolution, measured rhythmic action, and the economy of force.

Hence one may generalise, and say: Only gradual, rhythmic change is permanent. All revolutions and excesses are diseases; that is, discords. If I strain myself to attain an abstract ideal by affirming that I am perfect now, or that I can see, when in deepest truth I am imperfect, or blind, the chief result is nervous strain; for all departures from normal, steady, concrete work in which energy is conserved are excesses for which one must pay the penalty.

It is utterly impossible for any healer or minister to give this one infallible remedy for all discord. It is a problem for each individual to work out patiently and persistently for himself. It is a part of our whole education. Start with the fact that you are a self-conscious, self-acting soul, played upon night and day, moment after moment, by a tireless stream of force. In so far as you understand and are adjusted, harmony results. In so far as you lack poise or oppose, you suffer. Not all the drugs in Christendom, not all the treatments that were ever heard of, can accomplish for you that which is absolutely and always an affair of conscious personal adjustment. What you think is of secondary consequence. For it may or may not assume dynamic form. It is your vital attitude, your

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habitual physical, sexual, cerebral relation to the forces that environ you, which regulates the result.

For poise is not a mere thought. It is not simply an ideal. It is a condition, an actual living relation, the centre of control of a complex organism. It is the kind of vibration you send out, the vibratory response which harmonises with the vibratory activities of the body. It is an attitude of power, a control of power, a habit both of life and of thought; and if you want to make your thought dynamic, use power. Direct your soul-power so that it shall impinge upon and control your mental and physical powers.

Equanimity, then, is a dynamic attitude. It is attained on the highest plane by adjustment to the concrete activities of Spirit. He who is at one with, is adjusted to, the divine, creative life, has that power with which he may reach down to and control every atom, every power, that is in him. Poise must be spiritual if it is to be perfect. As such, there is nothing that can withstand it. It is worth all the years of development necessary to attain it.

Thus far we have considered the development of poise chiefly from the physical and mental sides, as matter of self-control and the economy of motion, but it is evident that the serene spiritual faith of the Friends and others whose lives reveal equanimity is in reality the prime cause of this priceless possession. The soul must have attained some measure of spiritual peace and trust, must have found a fairly satisfactory theory of the universe. The avoidance

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of the little worriments and frictions of every-day life, the attainment of harmonious physical adjustment is absolutely essential; but philosophical serenity naturally and necessarily leads to these.

Probably the surest foundation for philosophical serenity is such a theory of the unity of life, the solidarity of the race, and the belief in God which we have described as "The New Point of View." It is only when man has evolved out of the old orthodoxy and acquired the true basis of trust, namely, knowledge of natural law, that he can begin to be serene. Light must dawn on the dark mystery of pain and evil before the mind becomes sufficiently reconciled to regard Nature's strife with calmness. And the inner light must be carried to all the world, one must be assured that every day has witnessed its deed of spiritual service, or faith and understanding will not be sufficient to maintain this serenity.

The serene heart is not merely poised in the contentment of self, it is continually deepened by sympathy and love. Furthermore, the demand for success must be satisfied. Education must have brought those opportunities for self-expression for which the soul, if true to the ideal of individuality, so deeply longs. The severely simple life which many Friends lead is far from the rounded-out life of philosophical education.

Equanimity does not, therefore, mean inactivity. It is not a mere floating down the stream of unruffled contentment. One may live an undisturbed

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life in this way, but one cannot grow. Growth means continual readjustment. In many directions, equanimity is the reward only of weary months and years of persistent overcoming.

When we become poised, we think that if we could only remain so all would be perfect. But it is the " ups and downs " of our moral and spiritual struggles which enable us to grow. Always to choose a smoothly favourable environment would mean that one would miss some of life's noblest opportunities.

While it is undoubtedly true that some kinds of intellectual work can only be performed in a quiet study, with no thought of the demands of practical and social life, it is apparently wiser for the majority to remain in constant touch with their fellows, to be subject to " annoying " interruptions and the necessity of earning their daily bread. The man whose work is carried on under such circumstances, who acquires serenity amidst them, is likely to be less selfish, more human, more concrete, and his doctrine is sure to be more practical. Art for art's sake and truth for truth's sake are praiseworthy ideals, but only those who have overcome self in large measure are strong enough to endure the temptations of an environment where all annoyances are headed off by kind friends, and where all the bills are paid.

The wealthy man or woman may possibly be serene under chosen conditions, where the furnishings are luxurious, each article of food is cooked and seasoned to suit the taste, and where there are

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multitudes of servants to anticipate every wish, but there is little spirituality and no democracy in this sort of life. It is more like absolute slavery. The free man is one who can adjust himself to any environment, to any kind of weather, to any climate, any sort of bed or food. The serene man is he who can calmly see any possible change take place in a chosen environment, who meets all the accidents of travel with composure, and avoids the wear and tear of nervous friction by living above all this in a transcendental world.

To triumph is better than to succumb or to command a favourable environment. Any environment is favourable if we know how to meet it with equanimity. It is not that when we attain equanimity we no longer suffer and contend, but that we learn how to conquer without that burdensome friction which wears away the majority of people long before their earth life is complete. It is inner self-control and serenity which creates the very calmness, the receptivity in which we can clearly see how to act and how to overcome. When a man thus triumphs over that which at first seemed wholly unfavourable, he earns the right to those days and weeks of uninterrupted work in which the closest thinking can alone be done.

There is a difference, then, between obstacles as signs that one is nearing the danger line of excess, and obstacles which, because of the moral and spiritual evolution they bring, must be met and conquered. The difference between them is clearly

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learned only by personal experience. For each soul must know for itself when to move victoriously forward and when to rest and harmonise. Each soul must learn how to work to the best advantage, when it is wiser to desist than to push forward. Then the fatigue limit will be approached less and less frequently, until finally the physical organism shall not only be in entire subjection, but come quickly to the support of the more heroic activities of the soul.

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CHAPTER IV

THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

It is a hidden force to be dealt with and educated, for it is often found insubordinate and unruly.—HENRY WOOD.

OUR discussion has now brought us to the point where we may intelligently consider the more hidden activities of the human mind. We have considered man's relation to the cosmos of evolution, the intimate connection between the growth of character and the ideals of education, and the value of self-control, equanimity, and poise. We have found that the problem of health is a part of the problem of education, and that the entire reform in educational methods is dependent upon due recognition of the spiritual ideal applied with utmost faithfulness to the lives of those who have education in charge.

Already we have caught glimpses, in the preceding chapter, of that highly important law which regulates the deepest functioning of the mind. Equanimity is the power it is because of its habitual, though subconscious, influence upon the activities of the body. It is not what we think

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superficially and in passing that regulates our lives, but the habitual state of our organisms as centres either of nervous discord or of harmonious adjustment. It is the deep undercurrent of life which sways us, and this is the synthesis of all we have thought and done in the past; it is thought and character made continuously dynamic.

It is still too early, perhaps, to formulate a wholly satisfactory theory of the subconscious mind. It is only recently that the subject has received scientific consideration, and the data of psychical research promise to be so rich that it will be long before there are established conclusions accepted by great numbers of scientific men. The literature of the subject is still in its formative period. There are many books on suggestion, hypnotism, and psychology in which subconsciousness is briefly treated, but no work which adequately considers the entire subject.[1]

Meanwhile, each observer has a wonderful laboratory in his own consciousness, where the deep activities of the mind may easily be studied without reference either to spiritistic or other occult phenomena. For the subconscious mind, whatever else it is, is first individual: it partakes of the characteristics of the particular temperament. Whatever may affect it during sleep, mediumship, hypnosis,

[1] For a statement of the various points of view consult Janet, *L'Automatisme Psychologique;* Hudson, *The Law of Psychic Phenomena* (McClurg); Dr. H. T. Schofield, *The Unconscious Mind* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls); and the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* (3 Boylston Place, Boston).

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or thought transference is primarily conditioned by the conscious life. The subconscious mind should therefore be studied as in every way as normal a function as eating or sleeping, with not the least suggestion of the occult or the uncanny.

The subconscious mind, then, is not a distinct mind; it is one phase of the general mental process. It embraces all that portion of our mental life which lies below the plane of conscious feeling, active thought, and will or volition. It is as much a part of one mind as the life of the plant below ground is a part of the same life which functions above ground, the difference being a difference in process. The above-ground life of the mind is attended by self-consciousness, that peculiar sentiment which differentiates every conscious mental state as belonging particularly to the ego or individual soul. When the soul is thus active, when the conscious mind feels, it not only feels but knows that it feels. It is likewise self-consciously aware of its thoughts and volitions. It gives conscious attention, for example, to an object moving before the eyes; it thinks about it; then chooses some line of conduct in relation to and suggested by it. While the mind is thus closely engaged, it cannot, of course, give an equal degree of attention to any other object. Our actively conscious life is limited to a single object or idea.

But this is not the whole mind. While the self-conscious process thus concentrates upon one object, it is more or less dimly aware of surrounding lights and shades, intrusive noises, or sensations and

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thoughts arising from within. There is thus a gradual transition from the chosen object of thought to the dimly perceived, the indistinct, and finally to the subconscious, or that of which we are not at the time aware at all. That all these minor objects are, however, noted more or less vividly by the semi-conscious mind, is proved by the fact that when the mind relaxes the intensity of its concentration, it can, by an effort of will, recall events which happened while the attention was absorbed in the chosen direction.

Sometimes when reading aloud to a friend, one will suddenly discover that one has read half a page almost without knowing it. An attractive idea sent the mind off on a train of thinking of its own. This, for the time being, was the object of actively conscious thought, and the mind forgot that it was reading. After a moment or two the reverie becomes less pointed, and the mind has an opportunity to discover that the attention has wandered. But that a part of the mind was still absorbed in the reading is proved by the fact that the friend was not aware of the momentary shifting of conscious attention. It is in this way that all the phenomena which occur below the actively conscious point are discovered. Strictly speaking, we are never aware of our subconscious life; we know the subconscious only so far as it becomes conscious; we know it by inference, by retrospect, and by its effect on the mind and body.

In a normal state, for example, all the functions

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of the body are maintained involuntarily; that is, subconsciously. We are conscious of these functions only when discord arises. The sensation of pain acquaints us with the fact that we have overstepped the mark, that we have lost our equanimity, or that something has disturbed the rhythmic action or equilibrium of the body. In the same way, the effects of mental changes upon the body are produced subconsciously; we are unaware of them in so far as they are moderate and normal. If my heart beats violently, or if I feel a sensation of fatigue, I do not consciously act upon the heart, the nerves, or the muscles. I become mentally calm and restful. The body immediately begins to respond through the hidden activities of the subconscious mind.

This apparently trivial statement is important because it shows how a serene thought or health-bearing suggestion may be felt even to the extremities of the body, although there be no conscious effort to apply it. The subconscious mind attends to all this. Only give it the right turn, only impress upon it the kind of thought which you wish embodied, and you will find subconsciousness ready to carry it out in proportion to the confidence and emphasis with which the command is given. Just as the decision to awake at a given hour in the morning is followed by a restful night and a prompt awakening at the proper time, or a disturbed, wakeful night, according as the command is given quietly or anxiously, so every suggestion bestowed upon this

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wonderfully responsive agent is accompanied by the kind of mental state with which the thought is sent out.

It is our subconsciousness, then, which realises the ideals, volitions, and decisions of conscious thought. If a given suggestion, such as the child's desire to imitate its parents and learn to walk, is followed by repeated suggestions of a similar character, the ideal becomes a habit. All our habits are therefore subconscious activities. If you wish to change your habits you must first train your subconscious mind. If you would know how you have thought yourself into servitude or disease, how you have built character and acquired a method of conduct, you must trace the natural history of your moods and the resultant influences upon habit and the physical functions or bodily activities. There are possibilities here of growth, of reform and education, so great that the mind is awed by contemplation of them as one realises the scope of subconscious mental action.

Again, it is clear that the subconscious mind is at least as exhaustive in scope as memory. The term "memory" conceals many mysteries, but these are at any rate no greater when grouped under another term. Just as a continuous succession of pictures is impressed on the camera, which seizes all the details of a living scene for reproduction in that wonderful panorama, the biograph, so the tireless receptive plate of subconsciousness registers the pictures, sensations, and thoughts of the mind, storing them

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away where they may be quickly recalled even after the lapse of many years. Thus the subconscious mind is a storehouse constantly being enlarged. Of course the effectiveness with which it responds to suggestion depends upon the type of mind. A stupid consciousness is supported by a dull subconsciousness. The deeper self of the educated man is overflowing with possibilities of subconscious action. The power of subconsciousness therefore depends on the degree and kind of education.

Let us trace the conscious activity from its apex, where the attention is concentrated, down through what some writers have called "the pyramid of thought," which insensibly blends with the subconscious. Let the actively conscious thought in this case be the analysis of the term "subconsciousness." Let the earth on which the pyramid rests represent the great realm of the subconscious. Below the apex of thought there are minor associated thoughts, which rise for a moment from subconsciousness, are looked at in relation to the point in question, then dismissed. Lower still, allied thoughts rise which are immediately dismissed because they are not germane to the subject.

Still lower, there is a steady play of consciousness arising from the objects around. For example, the movement of my pen on the paper, the books and magazines on the desk, the hard surface of the desk on which my body is leaning, the delicious sunny air of a beautiful summer morning, the singing of the birds, etc.—all these tend to become

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apexes of thought, but they are not permitted to become such, because I choose to have them serve now only as the mere filling of the pyramid. In other words, I concentrate, and the reason why my mind is a pyramid is just because of this rejection of all thoughts except so far as they reveal a relationship to the one idea under consideration, namely, subconsciousness.

Every moment, as I think, there is a continual upflow from the great world on which the pyramid rests. Every experience of my life is registered there, every word with which I am acquainted, every thought that ever passed through my mind. At least, this is the hypothesis. That it is a true statement is clear from the fact that if I send down my messenger, or desire, it will bring up any memory I wish, although sometimes when I forget the shelf number the hunt is a long one, and even the librarian is occasionally puzzled.

For example, while I write these lines my messenger is hunting for records of experiences which throw light on our subject. I am not conscious of his searchings. For my vividly conscious thought has all it can attend to in the study and arrangement of the data which steadily rise into the pyramid, and the act of writing requires no small amount of conscious power.

But as I approach the end of a paragraph and pause for a moment to take a new observation,—for the contents of the pyramid are like the pictures in a biograph, the combination changes every instant,

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—I notice a messenger ascending with an attractive volume which promises to be of value. It is dusty, and has occupied a shelf for over eighteen years, with but few calls for its circulation. I open it and read that once when I was a telegraph operator in California I was called into my office at night, because of an accident at an adjoining station. A flood of memories rush into mind as I read, and it is with difficulty that I restrain them. Among them I choose first the fact that, as Jack-at-all-trades in the railroad station, it was my duty to listen to the telegraph instrument whatever else I was doing—selling tickets, adding figures, or conversing: this must always be next below the apex of thought, ready to become the apex if I heard the magic letters " Po,"—my call.

Now on this particular night I fell asleep in my chair, not a fatal lapse of duty, as I was not in a signal-tower, and as I was at my post only because a locomotive was side-tracked at my station until orders should come for its departure. But at any rate I fell asleep. Suddenly I awakened—the magic call, " Po." The instruments had been busy all the time, no doubt, for it was an exciting time, and at most stations night operators were on duty. But I had heard nothing. Yet something heard while I slept—that is, while the entire pyramid was below the surface. For the familiar sound brought up, by association, the whole pyramid. It was brought up because I had trained my mind to respond to that call under any and all circumstances. Its effect was

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as involuntary as the result produced on a peasant working in the fields in France when a company of soldiers passed near by and the commander shouted an order; the peasant, who had been a soldier, immediately stopped his work and with his hoe assumed the position commanded.

I have no sooner returned this volume to the messenger, who immediately returns it to its subconscious shelf, than another is brought to me, and I recall that one morning, three years ago, when I boarded the train at Hartford, Conn., for Boston, there suddenly came to consciousness this thought, "There will be an accident, but you will be all right." Accordingly, I confidently started on my journey. All went well until the train reached Wellesley, fifteen miles from Boston. Suddenly the train stopped with sufficient force to throw some of the passengers from their seats. Enquiry revealed the fact that the engine had broken down. The prophecy delivered from the subconscious world was verified; an accident had happened, but I was unhurt. Those who discipline their subconscious minds will frequently have experiences of a similar nature.

But the subconscious mind does not merely register, retain, and forewarn; it possesses an assimilative function. Listen to a lecture, or read a book, then turn to some other occupation or subject, equally absorbing, and you will find that not even the presence of this new interest or activity has interfered with your subconscious thought on the first

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theme. Possibly the book or lecture has come into your consciousness once or twice meanwhile, and you have been aware of brooding over it. But you have been scarcely conscious of it until some day, weeks afterwards, some one asks a question concerning it, or you hear an opposing view. Lo and behold! the theme reappears, elaborated by all the corresponding harmonies which your life has known, and you are surprised to find how it has grown upon you. Evidently, the data concerning a particular subject gravitate by a hidden law of association to allied data, then assume new relations according as they qualify or supplement that which is already known. It is astonishing sometimes to learn the resources of one's own mind after one of these periods of synthetic assimilation.

Yet even this synthetic power is surpassed in value and wonder by the greater receptivity of subconsciousness. Probably this hidden capacity varies greatly in different minds. For, as we have noted, the subconscious mind is closely conditioned by temperament, and a spiritually sensitive soul stamps its habits upon this deeper process of the mind, while a more intellectual nature is characterised by a more strictly rational subconsciousness.

There are plenty of instances on record of the solution of difficult mathematical and scientific problems during sleep.[1] Whatever problem absorbs the conscious mind is likely to generate a corresponding activity in subconsciousness. But I refer more

[1] See Carpenter's *Mental Physiology*.

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especially to earnest prayers or desires for light on dark points where there is almost nothing to draw upon in the storehouse of memory. Experience again and again shows that these prayers sent out into the great universal world attract answers which come to consciousness later, sometimes at the close of a night's sleep, sometimes intruding their revelations into the busiest moods of the day.

This sudden welling into consciousness of subconscious streams of thought is one of the surest proofs that a part of the mind never rests. Oftentimes when one is away on a vacation, or off for a day's rest, with the avowed intention of avoiding all philosophical thought, and again in the crowded street where the mind is so absorbed that there is apparently no channel left open, these subconscious deliverances surprise the mind with their evidences of progressive thinking. Now a new idea appears which leads the way to a long train of valuable reflection, and now a thought which is essential to an essay just completed and put away "to season." Again, a certain sentence from the essay so persistently rises that at last one perceives that it must be reconstructed or omitted. Other thoughts occur to mind because they could find no entrance until the conscious mind became more quiet.

I once tested this subconscious power of reminding the conscious self when there is sufficient receptivity, by suggestively concentrating my thought upon a certain idea which I wanted a friend to add to the extempore lecture which he was delivering and to

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which I was listening. My friend paid no heed to the silent suggestion until there came a pause in the rapid flow of his thought, and immediately he gave utterance to the idea which his subconsciousness had received ten or fifteen minutes before.

Again, a sensitively organised speaker enters into subconscious affinity with his auditors, notably in a small and very sympathetic audience, and adapts his discourse to the needs of his hearers, answering their questions and voicing their longings so effectively as to call out the surprised comment of those who afterwards come forward to compare notes with the speaker. In fact the tendency to " speak for the audience " is sometimes so strong that a speaker must be on his guard to keep it within bounds. In a highly cultivated audience this subconscious influence is helpful, but in a mediocre gathering there is a tendency to lower the standard.

Sensitive minds respond to the same subconscious connection with another mind when sitting down to write a letter to the person in question. Here, also, the effect is helpful or hampering according to the type of mind addressed. That these effects are not wholly due to one's own subconsciousness is proved by instances like the following.

I once sat down to write to a man whom I did not know and whom I had never seen. To my surprise I found myself inclined to conceal my real thought, even to deceive, and the influence was so strong that I could hardly overcome it. Later, I learned that the man was one who concealed an insincere

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disposition under a polite exterior, and I felt nothing genuine in the answer which came to my letter.

The most important phase of subconscious receptivity is, however, that power by which we are spiritually guided. The reason for this greater subconscious receptivity is easily found. In the deeper world there is no hampering self-consciousness, no anxious forcing of the brain to think. The deeper self is evidently in immediate living contact with the immanent Spirit, and what it receives from that is limited only by the power of the desire or prayer which sets it into activity. The Spirit is wisdom, it knows what is true and what is right, and guidance is made known to the conscious self which far surpasses in foresight the keenest intuitions of merely self-conscious thought. Is it not probable that every soul is guided in this way far more than any of us suspects ?

Yet that which comes spontaneously may be consciously sought, for the subconscious mind is in all respects a willing servant, as readily amenable to prayer as to suggestion. Therefore we should trust it more and more, committing our problems to it, ever waiting in patience for its marvellous deliverances. This is another way of following the lines of least resistance which we have considered in the foregoing chapter. It is one of the greatest secrets of life to learn the workings of this silent partner, and so to adapt conscious conduct that it shall most beneficially co-operate with these deeper mental activities.

One learns, that if philosophy, for example, is the

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greatest interest in life, the subconscious mind is constantly brooding over the great problems of human existence. New data must continually be supplied, but these serve only as the merest hints which start long meditations, until, at a favourable hour, the conscious self is gladdened by results wholly unexpected and oftentimes very novel.

Again and again I have tested the ability of the subconscious mind to solve philosophical difficulties, so that I am indulging in no mere hypothesis when I say that, the mind once trained to seek light on such problems, one may confidently rely on subconsciousness to solve them. The essential is patient trust, willingness to wait until this deeper self has not only looked up all the references in the library of memory, but has had opportunity to assimilate the data thus collected and intermingle with them the new ideas which are the natural product of this wonderful process of subconscious induction. If you send your messenger for these data before they have been assimilated you will find the result very imperfect. It is not for you to dictate. You must await the spontaneous rising of the completed solution into the pyramid of thought. The subconscious mind knows the fitting time; it will not bear dictation. You must adjust yourself to its rhythm, otherwise you shall not know its most wonderful powers. When you at last acquire this adjustment, you will be surprised at the productiveness of your own mind, equally surprised at the ease with which your thinking is done.

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And now another messenger from the subconscious is waiting with a book. It is entitled *The Law of Psychic Phenomena*, by Hudson. It is not so old as the above described volumes, and it has been out of the library only once or twice. With it come volumes which somehow have grown since I placed them there. About Hudson's theory there cluster all the arguments against it which have gathered since his artificial hypothesis appeared. Through no conscious effort of mine, the subconscious librarian has catalogued and arranged them all, where at the mere mention of the name, Hudson, they rise *en masse* into the pyramid.

In the first place, Hudson's theory that this deeper mind is incapable of inductive reasoning does not coincide with the facts, either in the case of those acute observers with whom I have compared notes or with the facts of my own consciousness which, as I have said, constantly reveals the inductions of subconsciousness. Let us inquire into this subject for a moment.

What is induction? Webster defines it as "reasoning from a part to a whole, or from particulars to generals." Mill tells us that it is "inference from the known to the unknown." Jevons more fully defines it[1] as the detection of "general laws or uniformities, the relations of cause and effect." He believes, with most philosophers, that the greater part of our knowledge is thus derived.

Now this is precisely the process of which, so far

[1] *Lessons in Logic.*

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as one may judge from personal experience, the subconscious mind is capable. The conscious mind furnishes the data, the disconnected observations, and random thoughts. This process sometimes continues for weeks or months, even years, before any result appears. Then the central principle is revealed, the general law which was all the time latent in these fragmentary data, the bearing of which the conscious mind did not detect. But when all the facts were supplied, when that particular mood ended, the subconscious mind took the subject under advisement. The only conscious concomitant observable was a sort of abstractedness, that feeling of mental fulness which the close observer of the subconscious process learns after a time to associate with the last stages of induction, the preparation to bring forth a general synthetic result.

The subconscious mind evidently does not assume the pyramid form. It is capable of carrying on multiform processes at once, and a given process or train of connected ideas is spread out in a manner impossible to the conscious mind because of the limitations of the latter process. In this spread-out form in which great stretches of data are seen, as it were, from a mountain top, it is possible for the light of induction to illumine the whole vast array. It is this inductive illumination which forthwith flashes into consciousness and reveals the law exemplified but unperceived in all the preceding months of study and meditation.

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The subconscious mind is not, then, a separate mind, as Hudson contends. There is no sharp division between objective and subjective. Such divisions are always artificial, hypothetical, not natural. In nature, process insensibly blends with process, as colour blends with colour in the spectrum. Thus do the planes of consciousness blend. Physical sensation shades into perception by a process so subtle that no psychological examination can detect the transition. Perception leads to thought, and thought tends to become volition. There is no such mental experience as mere sensation, mere intellection, or mere will. These and all other terms employed by psychology to describe mental states simply denote certain conditions in which a particular phase of consciousness is *more prominent* than those states with which it is associated.

In the same way our intellectual processes blend with our moral and spiritual consciousness. The fact of telepathy does not mean the presence in us of another mind, but only another phase of consciousness. All these phases may become subconscious. Subconsciousness is one phase only of our total consciousness. All phases of consciousness, physical, intellectual, moral, psychic, and spiritual, self-consciousness, the so-called superconscious, and the subconscious mind, belong to one soul, whose many-sidedness enables it to function on all these varying, yet interrelated and blending planes.

Some might allege that there are two minds because we have "two selves" in us. But the

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contrast and struggle between lower and higher is, as we shall see more fully in another chapter, the foundation of our moral existence; this contrast is essential to the development of *one* soul, one moral ego. The soul flourishes amidst the interactions and conflicts of its own hostile moods. The co-presence of many moods or selves is consistent with the existence of one soul. Duality of mind—that is, duality of aspects, does not necessarily mean the separate existence of these aspects.[1]

All moods and selves are turned to account when the soul comes to judgment. The grand ideal is the supremacy of the soul over all these moods, the triumph of the Spirit over every phase of consciousness.

The most important fact concerning the subconscious mind, therefore, is the possibility of its subserviency as an agent of the soul. The soul must first possess itself, the conscious mind must be trained, and spiritual receptivity must at least be an ideal, before a high degree of subconscious power may be acquired. But in all these attainments it is the subconscious mind which lays the foundations of its own future power. The very desire to develop subconscious power is itself a suggestion. The training of the deeper self goes on simultaneously and co-extensively with the growth of the conscious self. If you would reap only permanently beneficial results, you must therefore set the pace which

[1] For further arguments against the dual theory, see "Hudson's Duality of Mind Disproved," by T. E. Allen, the *Arena*, July, 1895.

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harmonises with gradual evolution and the rhythmic functioning of the body. The prime essential is the discovery that one has a subconscious mind, or rather that the soul functions subconsciously, never wholly ceases to be active. The discovery once made, it rests with the observer to choose what types of consciousness shall be most persistently cultivated.

Some occultists make it a point to recall their dreams from subconsciousness. Some claim that the soul travels during sleep. But these experiences, if possible, may be overcome by those who desire to become wholly normal and reposeful. In my own case, dreams have failed to teach me anything except in two instances, and in neither of these was there any evidence that the soul travelled. My own experience also shows that as equanimity grows, dreams come less and less frequently, until finally they cease, except in cases of extreme fatigue.

Of sleep, F. W. H. Myers says[1]: "I regard sleep as an alternating phase of our personality, distinguished from the waking phase by the shutting off of the supraliminal [conscious] attention upon the profounder organic life. To sleep's concentrated inward attention I ascribe its unique recuperative power. . . . In waking consciousness I am like the proprietor of a factory whose machinery I do not understand. My foreman—my subliminal[2] self

[1] *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, part xxxiv., p. 107.

[2] Myers uses this term instead of "subconsciousness."

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—weaves for me so many yards of broadcloth per diem (my ordinary vital processes). If I want any pattern more complex, I have to shout my orders in the din of the factory, where only two or three inferior workmen hear me, and shift their looms in a small and scattered way. . . . At certain intervals, indeed, the foreman stops most of the looms, and uses the freed power to stoke the engine and to oil the machinery. This, in my metaphor, is sleep."

It is during these quiet hours of rest that the soul receives many of its choicest messages. Therefore the wise man cultivates that kind of sleep which is most in harmony with meditative listening. In this way the power of equanimity grows until, more and more, the subconscious life becomes part of the life of the Spirit. Into its precincts there come with growing frequency the peace, love, and guidance of the omnipresent Father. Thus ever more and more the spontaneous revelations of this most wonderful of all human functions become bearers of divine wisdom and messengers of divine power.

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CHAPTER V

THE SPIRITUAL IDEAL IN CHILDHOOD

Education does not commence with the alphabet: it begins with a mother's look, with a father's nod of approbation or sign of reproof, with a sister's gentle pressure of the hand or a brother's noble act of forbearance.—ALBERT MORTON.

ONE of the most strongly marked tendencies of our time is the change of attitude toward the child. Formerly the child's sphere was decidedly restricted, guarded at every turn by the dogmas and customs of a generation whose power is now rapidly waning. At present the child enjoys much greater liberty of speech and action in the home, while in school and college his individuality is constantly gaining in recognition. Those institutions in which the elective system prevails are in the front rank, and there is a tendency in all departments of school and college to extend the ideals and methods of the new education. From the kindergarten to the high-grade university the ideal will soon be the free expression of the individual soul. Opportunities of every sort are opening before the young mind: it is for the child to come to consciousness of these opportunities and to select those most in keeping with his needs.

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It is this belief that each soul is consciously, or subconsciously, in possession of an ideal which more than anything else characterises this change of attitude. Consequently, the methods employed are becoming idealistic. Instead of calling a child "naughty," or in any way looking upon him as the old pessimistic theology regarded him; instead of labelling a boy "thief" by pinning a placard on his coat because he had taken a ruler that belonged to another boy (an actual occurrence in a prominent public school ten years ago), the child is coming to be regarded from the point of view of evolution; and so the good, and not the bad, is named and encouraged.

It may be that the reaction has gone too far in some instances. The child may have too much license in certain directions. But, at any rate, he is attaining his freedom, he is being treated more like a human being, a fresh creation demanding modified methods in each case; and the foundations are being laid broad and deep for the nobler man of the future.

In this great work of rearing the ideal man, the influences of the home life are paramount, and the utmost which the school can accomplish is to supplement them. Properly speaking, this noblest of all creative work begins with the grandparents. At the latest, it should begin in the spiritual consecration of the father and mother long before the birth of their first child.

If the marriage is the fruition of spiritual affinity,

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this dedication of the soul to the life of the Spirit will be a spontaneous and natural consequence. Yet even if the parents have not attained a high spiritual level, it is possible for them to transcend their own plane through the earnest aspiration, the deep sympathetic receptivity by which their souls are given day by day to the Highest.

The knowledge that the soul is a centre of spiritually creative power is the first essential. Ever gently and persistently the soul is played upon by the immanent Spirit, welling up from within, seeking to attain higher and higher levels. The immanent power ever seeks an outlet through us. If it does not find it on one plane it seeks it on another. That is, it may be manifested physically, intellectually, or spiritually: through quickening and transcending love. The channel it takes is, of course, dependent on the controlling thought, the habits and directions of mind. If these decisive thoughts are centred upon the ideal, the ascent of man, the life of service and the Christ, the creative power will seek these higher levels, drawing to it forces which otherwise would have run to excess or found expression in passion or selfishness.

Thus the dominant ideal, the conscious and subconscious attitude of the parents, is expressed in the life of the child. There are possibilities so high and probabilities so strongly to be guarded against, that those who recognise them will hardly deem anything of such great importance as the transcendence of these probable tendencies and the realisation

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of the nobler possibilities of the soul. Not merely through the conscious aspiration, but through the far greater receptivity of the subconscious mind are these nobler powers attracted. It is the general attitude, the atmosphere of the home, the kind of affinity, the degree of love which tells, not simply the beliefs; for these may be superficial or only passing affirmations. The dynamic centre within is the decisive factor, and the idealism must be made as far as possible a mode of life, in order for the spiritual to dominate the undesirable characteristics which may also be transmitted.

Yet it is well to remember with Emerson that "our easy spontaneous action is always best." For what should be sacred may be made common if it become anxiously self-conscious.

The wiser process is to trust the spiritual ideal to the subconscious mind, to send it forth as a prayer into the great universe, to make it part and parcel of the habitual thought of daily life. The Spirit quickens whom it will. It enters where there is greatest receptivity, and this is often where, owing to the humility of those who are chosen, there is the least self-consciousness. For self-consciousness merely prepares the way; it is the Spirit which accomplishes.

Is it not probable that this subconscious spirituality of the parents is in many cases the cause of the more spiritual character of the offspring, wrongly attributed by Theosophists to reincarnation? If the parents are on the ascending scale, so to speak,

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may they not thus mount far beyond their present attainments, bequeathing a more advanced disposition to their children ?

To the question, When does the human soul begin ? I do not venture an answer. That seems to be a part of the enigma which makes all ultimate origins a mystery. I take it simply as a fact that a divine individuation comes out of the unknown into the known, and that the type of soul attracted to the parents depends largely upon the plane of life attained, and upon the degree of subconscious receptivity, particularly on the part of the mother. Whatever the soul may be as an original individuation of the creative Spirit, there is abundant evidence that the external characteristics are inherited from the parents and grandparents. Consequently, it is of utmost consequence that the parents attain not only soundness of body but equanimity, self-control; that they learn to draw upon the omnipresent creative resources of the Spirit.

The world has heard chiefly about unfortunate prenatal influences; it is now time to hear about the fortunate; better still, it is time to realise them. There is no question about the influence; it is only matter of choice. A marvellous power for good, for beauty, health, and love resides in the mental atmosphere which, figuratively speaking, surrounds the consecrated soul. All the forces of practical idealism, all the helpful mental pictures which the soul can command should be brought to bear for the maintenance of this atmosphere. It should be

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inspired by hope, health, every day and every hour. It should be the culmination of the mind's profoundest researches into the wonders and laws of evolution. In fact, evolution itself proceeds most successfully in this its most sacred environment, the aspiration of the mother heart.[1]

In the earliest years of the child's life, it is also the mental atmosphere, the spiritual presence, the father-mother life, which is most influential. Few parents realise how long their children are literally a part of them, how like a sensitive plant the little responsive agent vibrates with the inner attitude. If they realised the deeply sacred character of parenthood, what a reformation there would be in the lives of those who are now lacking in poise, deficient in even the rudiments of self-knowledge and self-control!

The merest observation shows to how slight a degree the little child is responsible for its character and deeds, how fully its life is dependent on the thoughts and acts of those with whom it is brought in constant relation. If a child is approached with force, impatiently, or in a condemnatory spirit, it quickly responds in a similar manner. On the contrary, if it be met with love, no being in the world is more pliable. There are boundless possibilities here, and it is well seriously to consider them. The

[1] The reader will find many very helpful thoughts, beautifully and forcibly stated, in *Ideal Motherhood*, by Minnie S. Davis (T. Y. Crowell & Co., 1898); and in *A Mother's Ideals*, published by the author, Andrea Hofer Proudfoot, 1400 Auditorium, Chicago, 1897.

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child is very seldom to blame; it is the attitude and activity of the approach that count.

When we are perfectly honest with ourselves, we confess that in nearly every case where we resorted to force with the little ones, it was because of our own lack of self-control, our impatience. Coercive measures are temporary and degrading substitutes employed while we are on the road to the manifestation and guidance of all things through the silent, gentle power of love and the Spirit. Punishment is self-bringing and, generally speaking, need not be administered by man, if the universe be permitted to teach it through the law of action and reaction. Man's part is to dwell, not on the negative conditions, but upon the ideal which is being achieved through them.

In many other ways, the mental attitude of the parents is the prime factor in the home. In illness as in health it is the father and mother, especially the mother and those who have the care of the child, who give the child's conditions the wrong or right turn. And it is of slight avail to doctor the child if it is cared for by those who are high-strung, nervous, full of fear, or ready to bestow upon the slightest ailment the name of some dreaded disease.

Parents possessed of common sense will keep their children close to nature, regarding the little aches and pains as mere frictions of growth to be overcome, not through the use of drugs, but by keeping in harmony with nature. It is a distressing but an actual fact that a healthy child may be made a

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weakling, and taught to suffer the entire round of (unnecessary) children's diseases, by watching every breath it draws, fearful lest a bit of Nature's pure and healthy air come nigh. Happily, these absurd ideas are passing, and there are many mothers nowadays who permit their children to grow as Nature guides. But there is still great need of reform, that the entire thought for the child may be dedicated to health and not to disease. The mother's love is of itself sufficient to cure the child of most of its ills, if all her thinking is toward the perfect, in trustful co-operation with the Spirit, if she herself is poised and strong.

Again, in the later years, it is important to remember that there are certain evolutionary stages through which the child passes which are best dealt with by dwelling on the positive side. Every one of these disagreeable features may be loved into traits of beauty through fidelity to the ideal, in conformity with the laws of evolution.

Give the child the earliest possible opportunity to learn the law of cause and effect. Let it discover that as fire always burns, so you are always to be depended on if approached in a certain mood. Do not threaten beyond what you have the heart to carry out. Be consistent and orderly.

A little later, point out that the same law applies to our thoughts as well, and so teach the child to build ideals, that it may as soon as possible lay the foundations of self-help.

When the child evinces some knowledge of this

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fundamental law of cause and effect, or action and reaction, the time has arrived for the first explanations concerning human existence. A beginning is best made by pointing out the law of growth as exhibited in plant life. Explain that as all plants spring from the seed which the child has put into its warm nest in the soil, so all animals have grown from a single cell, so all nature has evolved from small to great.

From step to step one may lead on, by the use of nature studies,[1] illustrations drawn from the child's life, by the aid of natural history books, until the time comes to explain that the human organism develops in the same way. If this explanation is rightly given it will be a memorable experience in the child's life.

In regard to the age at which this explanation should be made, it is difficult to state a rule because some children mature so much younger than others. Generally speaking, it is postponed far too long. Begin very early, long before the child can hear anything about its sex nature from any one but its mother. The beginning, of course, is in the right attitude on the part of the mother. .If her attitude calls out and cherishes the child's confidence, it will become a mighty power such that no outside influence can ever master it. Under these conditions the first thought of the boy or girl will always be, "What would mother say?" It is impossible to overestimate the power of this maternal influence

[1] For example, *Among the Forest People* and *Among the Meadow People*, by F. C. Gordon, New York: E. P. Dutton & Co.

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and devotion. It is the making of many men and women; for no school or college pretends to make a boy or girl "good."

All explanations concerning the creative life should be made with that dedication of soul, that spirit of sacredness which lifts the whole subject to the spiritual plane, and creates an atmosphere, a quality of thought, always associated with the subject by the child. The foundations of spiritual marriage are laid when this touch of sacredness is imparted. It is a divine moment in the life of man.

The explanation should, of course, be made in parts at different times, notably at about seven or eight and eleven or twelve, at which time the instruction should be complete and searching. But the essential thought should be implanted far earlier than this, when the child asks the first questions about its organism.

Do not be afraid to talk "over the head" of your little auditor. The child apprehends in its own way, and remembers even what it fails to understand. It is a very common mistake nowadays to simplify everything for children, to give them only infantile books. But our forefathers in the literary world had no such books. Consequently, they read the standard authors and poets even when they were mere boys. Thus they began very early to educate themselves, and to cultivate that fine literary sense which eventually became so strong that they never could have been induced to read the second-rate literature so widely circulated nowadays.

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A kindergarten teacher recently related the following effective incident. The children had been watching the growth of bulbs in the school, and when, a short time after, one of the little ones passed into the spiritual world, the teacher turned the entire thought away from death by teaching them to say in concert "Life goes on for ever." When, a few days later, a little boy spoke of their companion as "dead," a little girl immediately corrected him by saying, "Oh, no; life goes on for ever." The teacher expressed the belief that the ideal was so firmly implanted by this incident that it would never be forgotten.

The explanation of the law of growth is naturally supplemented by the great thought that behind all there is one Life, which awakens the world of vegetation in the spring, quickens the animal world, and brings us all into physical being. Thus the child may be given his first idea of the Father, as the logical outcome of the foregoing explanations. In this way the thought of the divine becomes a natural evolution, and the parents need have no fear that the young mind will later be won over by the enticements of the old theology. Years of unlearning, of ridding the mind of "lumber," as one victim expressed it, may thus be avoided.

In order to answer all the questions a child may ask when these great thoughts are imparted—and this is very essential—it is best to prepare one's self in advance.

"Do you happen to know how God came to be

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here?" a little boy recently asked his mother in despair, after having propounded the question in vain to several of his elders. The origin of God is sure to be one of the problems raised. To meet it, one should be prepared to show that a Power or Life must always have existed, that there always was a world, some world, else the trees and animals, and boys and girls, could not exist to-day. The entire explanation concerning natural law has prepared the way for this climax. It should be based entirely upon the law of cause and effect.

Be especially explicit in speaking of the soul as an immortal, continuously living being, superior to death. Call attention again and again to life, life, the invisible essence behind and within all that fades and perishes. Explain that the soul abides with and is in direct touch with the Father, from whom all our noblest aspirations come. Make the whole conception living, human, simple, close, and tender. Show that all this is true in the living now. Show how the Father speaks to the soul as conscience, as peace, as love, even as a human friend.

Nothing is more important than to make clear this great fact that the child is a soul, not a physical being. If this is clearly understood, all else will be clear. The thought may be made tangible by explaining that the soul is that in us which feels, thinks, chooses, and acts; that it is the part of us which feels and knows God, which loves, which we love, which owns and uses the body as an instrument.

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Thus the child may very early grasp the thought that there is a power in us which is superior to, and can not only control but transmute the little animal impulses. Many times this great principle may be enforced by meeting the child in unusual gentleness and love, if it chances to rush into the house in the opposite mood. The power of example, thus enforced, will in due time become first the ideal, then the habit, of the child.[1]

In this way, preparation may be made years before for the more strenuous years from twelve or thirteen to seventeen. The young mind will have acquired as a habit the power of turning its attention in a higher creative direction. It will know that ideas and ideals have life and grow like seeds in the subconscious mind, that if the thought is pure and the ideals high, the mind is fortified against the severest temptations and influences.

With this creative work in view, it is wise to encourage the experimental spirit as early as possible. Study the child's tastes and tendencies and give it tools and materials wherewith to express its original ideas. Thus the child will early discover the resources of the inner world and learn to draw upon them more and more.

If the start is right, if the home ideals are high, the outcome is assured. The higher may be severely

[1] In a recent discourse in Boston, Mozoomdar, the great Hindu religious teacher, summed up the whole of morality in childhood by saying, "Teach children first self-control; teach them, secondly, the doing of good deeds to others."

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buffeted at times, but it will always conquer. The essential is to believe in the soul, to call out the soul, to hold to the ideal, then to supply the necessary implements, the right environment, and give proper encouragement at those plastic times when the young life is most receptive and apt.

There is a happy medium between believing your child a genius and pushing it aside to depend on its own resources. First of all, believe in your child, judiciously encourage and sympathise with it, but do not forget that training of some sort is equally essential. Give it enough difficulties to encounter so that it may learn all the lessons of individual experiment, and acquire all the strength and skill of personal mastery. If you listen to your boy or girl as to a prophet, you will surely defeat all the purposes of the spiritual ideal. The wiser way is to hold that confidence which is ever an encouragement, without any of that worship which is a source of unproductive precociousness and self-conceit. Whether you are a parent or a teacher, regard the child as a human being, a new individual, a soul-equal, and your companionship is sure to be mutually helpful.

There is also a mean between the two extremes of over-training and the neglect of which many modern parents are guilty who have reacted too far from all educational methods. A boy is not an animal, nor is he a picture to be painted. If the little ones become the masters, the household loses its equilibrium. On the contrary, if the elders

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assume ownership, they forfeit the right to be guides and friends.

One cause of the modern disregard of the standards of obedience, and the growing irreverence for parents, is the absurd idea that we have "chosen our parents," and they are only secondary after all. It seems strange that one must remind Theosophists that every child who receives even the average amount of care, owes a debt to its mother and father which the noblest work of service to humanity will hardly repay. The fact that a child possesses qualities which differentiate it from its parents, does not necessarily prove that it is an "old soul." The mysteries of prenatal influence have not yet been solved.

The true basis of reverence is love. Where love reigns, there will be no probability that the ideals of parenthood and sonship will be neglected. This answers the vexed question concerning prayer. Some have feared that if a child is not taught to repeat a prayer, and later the "Lord's Prayer," it may develop an irreverent spirit. But if a child is taught to love the immanent, omnipresent Father, if the mother talks with the child as she should, all these contingencies will be avoided. Admirable substitutes for conventional prayers may be found in the excellent compilation by Whittier, *Child Life*,[1] and in verses like the familiar

> "Every day is a fresh beginning,
> Every morn is a world made new," etc.

[1] Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

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By teaching these and other idealistic verses, the complications of an outgrown theology[1] may be avoided.

Soon we must have Sunday-schools in keeping with these higher ideals, schools to which modern mothers may send their children without the consciousness that half the knowledge thus gained must be "unlearned" at home. Such schools will be based on nature studies, practical idealism, and a spiritual philosophy of life. They will supplement and be in harmony with the home teaching, and thus admirably carry forward the general work of spiritual education.

Under any conditions, the foundations of Sunday-school instruction should be laid at home, and when the higher[2] Sunday-schools are founded they should be conducted in the father and mother spirit. Thus the home is the beginning of all branches of education, and the foregoing ideals, although applicable in a measure to the schools, are of primary value when made vital factors in the thought of the parents. I have considered these ideals in a brief, suggestive, and fragmentary way because they become thus vitally instrumental only when the parents work out the principles for themselves.

[1] Do not, for example, use the terminology associated with the word "sin," but teach the child that its lower or animal nature is in process of growth. Let all instruction be idealistic. Let it all point forward.

[2] "Higher" because founded on the fact of the immanent Spirit, to which each soul may have immediate access, without the media of creeds, forms, and dogmas.

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There are few books which are of real value. The majority are like treatises on pedagogy — cut up, subdivided, and abounding in italicised definitions without number, but lacking that living touch which makes them truly human. The great resource is to start with natural law as a basis and develop your entire system from that. And the two great secrets of success in the application of natural principles are, first, to control yourself; and, second, to guide the child by continually interesting its attention; for attention is the very life of concentration and will: "*breaking the child's will is a cruel blunder.*"

Teachers usually complain that they have no time to apply these higher ideals, since they are at the mercy of the pressure system. But the teacher may at least adopt the evolutionary point of view in regard to the disagreeable stages of childhood, and approach the pupils in a spirit of optimism. Even if every minute be in subjection to the pressure system, the teacher may call the subconscious mind into play by impressing high ideals upon it a moment or two before losing consciousness in sleep. It is economy to do this. The subconscious mind will in due time affect daily conduct, and surely no teacher is so busy that a moment may not be taken to lower the voice, to speak more gently, and become more moderate. Then, to her surprise, the teacher will find that she does not "get so tired," that she has more time. Thus equanimity will accomplish what school reform cannot. Our nervous, hurrying life is the real cause of the pressure system. When

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we change our mode of life, a modified curriculum will be a natural and inevitable result.

With a reform in our thought and life, a reform in kindergarten methods will also follow.[1] Froebel was inspired by a grand ideal of spiritual education, but many of his exponents are unequal as yet to the task of interpreting him. An entire philosophical system is involved in his doctrine, and one must live and think deeply to understand it.

The chief defects of current kindergarten methods are not, however, philosophical but practical. As at present carried out, Froebel's ideas undoubtedly lead to many vague fancies which must some time give place to sound scientific knowledge. The diffusion of force exemplified in some kindergartens must also be remedied. If all instruction could be in harmony with natural law, there would be little need of many of the methods now employed.

Nature teaches concentration, system. The child whose training is grounded in natural law may be educated by a higher method than either the old orthodox system with its enforced silence and irksome reverence, or the new method, or lack of method, with its extreme regard for passing whims and fancies. Just as extreme restriction at home breeds deceit among the children and is harmful to the parents who uphold the rules, so the neglect of that training which gives concentration is followed by unfortunate results in the later years of mental unfolding.

[1] See an able critique by President Stanley Hall in the *Forum*, January, 1900.

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Yet there are times when the child's native instincts are to be consulted in preference to an accepted theory of education, as the following instance shows. The editor of a kindergarten magazine advised her readers to have the little children press and mount flowers. Accordingly, a certain kindergartner, much against her will, but accepting the authority of her chief as final, proposed an excursion to the fields for the purpose of pressing flowers. Her pupils declared their lack of interest, but the teacher still persisted, although the little ones manifested no pleasure when a book was produced and the dainty flowers were plucked from their waving stems to be imprisoned within its leaves. When the time came, a few days later, to open the book and mount the flowers, one little fellow piped up and exclaimed, "Well, we 've killed them this time." The teacher persisted, however, and showed the children how to mount the flowers. But one could have heard a pin drop during the operation, she said. And then and there the teacher decided to obey the promptings of Nature rather than the dictates of authority.

Froebel assures us[1] that "education in instruction and training, originally and in its first principles, should necessarily be passive, following (only guarding and protecting), not prescriptive, categorical, interfering." Everything depends upon how deeply we understand the child, and the natural law whereby the soul is to be led forth into expression. When

[1] *Education of Man*, p. 7.

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we begin truly to understand this leading, as Froebel perceived it, we may find that a large part of our educational system is at fault. And so our final word in regard to the whole system, from the kindergarten to the university, is that it is experimental; it advances only as the experiment called life advances, and possibly we have progressed only a little way in the multiform solution essential to a satisfactory theory of education.

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CHAPTER VI

AN EXPERIMENT IN EDUCATION

Every life is a profession of faith, and exercises an inevitable and silent propaganda. As far as lies in its power, it tends to transform the universe and humanity into its own image.—AMIEL'S JOURNAL.

THE inner life of man is a progressive awakening to the laws and opportunities of the soul as a creative agent in the great world of nature and society. It begins with the first dim intimations of self-consciousness as contrasted with its environment, and proceeds stage by stage until the soul at last becomes conscious of the grand possibilities of evolutionary education. The soul then for the first time learns its sacred significance as an organic factor in the wonderfully varied system of divine self-manifestation. A new sense of responsibility is quickened, a new impetus is imparted to daily life, and existence is held to be worth living in a sense never dreamed of before. For with this deep quickening of the ethical and spiritual incentives, there dawns a consciousness of the close relationship of all human beings as sharers and helpers in the same great evolutionary process.

This organic fellowship of all human souls we

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shall consider more at length in a later chapter. But, accepting it as the most important phase of the discovery that man is a creative agent, it is evident that each man's educational experiment should as early as possible be adapted with this social ideal in view. Individuality is no doubt an end in itself, yet it becomes truly itself only as it is contributory, and we must keep the social ideal in sight in order to lift education to the spiritual plane. In this way we shall avoid the eccentricities which so often characterise a merely individualistic experiment in education.

Frankly accepting life as an experiment, with the knowledge that each soul is essentially unlike all other souls, yet designedly so, that it may creatively add to life's social evolution, it is clear that we must adapt all educational methods to this infinite variety, and depart as far as possible from all mechanical standards. Since education at best is only the means, while the soul is the end, education should be inspired by knowledge of its sacred function: a calling out to the full of the individual creative power of each soul recognised as of special worth in itself.

It is clear, however, that educators may err in their zealous emphasis of the individualistic side. While each soul needs specific attention and an individually favourable environment, there are many ideals which may be realised in common, there is culture which everybody needs. For example, everyone must learn self-control, everyone must

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acquire concentration, must learn to think, become quickened to the love of truth for its own sake, beauty for art's sake, and utility as a prime essential in all training. Every person needs the discipline of a thorough system, and there is a strong argument for postponing the experimental years until "the age of reason."

Because of the value of school and college training as contrasted with personal experiment, the educational world is likely to be divided for many generations to come between two sharply contrasted methods of culture: teaching by authority, graduated system, precise and thorough as that of Germany; and teaching by the elective plan, by self-development and experiment. A philosopher would probably say that the wisest method is a synthesis of these extremes. But adjustment between extremes is precisely the problem which the practical worker finds most difficult. As long as authorities differ, the controversy concerning this adjustment is sure to present ever fresh problems, and both extremes are likely to become more extreme before a satisfactory solution is reached.

Meanwhile the decision in a particular case is likely to depend chiefly upon inheritance, environment, and the accidents of fortune. Yet as every life is a fresh experiment, seemingly accidental instances may throw great light on the total problem. My own education has been almost wholly of an unconventional sort, and the doctrine of this book is necessarily, perhaps helpfully, coloured by it. I

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attended school but four years, I did not spend a day in a high or preparatory school, and five years of business experience came before I entered college at twenty-four. And so, having wholly avoided the pressure system, my experiment may serve either to point out the way in which danger lies, or be an illumination to those similarly placed, as the individual may decide.

For those who can bear it, there may be nothing better than the strenuously thorough training of the German *gymnasium*, and in the case of Professor Münsterberg, its latest and ablest champion,[1] this system seems to have presented no obstacles. But the crucial question is, Do we wish to evolve only German scientists? Is a man likely to become original, spiritual, creative, under this process? If not, we must have a wholly different environment to meet a totally different demand.

Moreover, the number of "misfits" is increasing, those who, sensitively organised, extremely nervous or introspective, do not thrive in any school. There are many whose health will not permit such strenuous work; this is especially the case with tall boys who grow very rapidly between the ages of fourteen and sixteen. In these cases, the only alternative, of course, is to instruct the children at home for a time, then give them such schooling at intervals as can be borne without detriment, supplemented by physical culture, manual training, or the learning of

[1] See the *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1900. Professor Münsterberg's strongest point is his plea for better-trained teachers.

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a trade. Among the boys of this type whom I have had opportunity to observe, those have thrived best who, never permitted to be idle while unable to attend school, have been taught a trade.

Every thoughtful person knows that to learn one thing well is more profitable than to acquire a smattering of many arts and sciences. Everywhere the individual leads to the universal, and when a man has mastered an art or science, he is prepared to begin in earnest to realise the scientific man's advice: "Know everything about something; know something about everything." The chief fault of conventional education is that it teaches so many subjects in so short a time. But just that attainment which high and preparatory schools usually do not give, namely, concentration, the power of individual thought, is the freest gift to all who learn a trade or some practical occupation which they enjoy.

In the first place, the mastering of a trade which must become remunerative as soon as possible, compels one to be practical. In the case of an introspective, idealistic, or speculative temperament, this is of great moment; it lays the foundation for the whole of life of that balancing tendency which keeps the mind from flying aloft to visionary heights. This gift from practical life is worth more to a mind of the above-mentioned type than all the classic instruction in the world. A mind of this type is apt to take itself too seriously, to overestimate the value of its own opinions, if it be not thus early brought

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in close contact with the demands of practical existence.

Again, the technical knowledge thus gained is sure to be of value. If a boy is placed where he must keep accounts for a time, he learns arithmetic by using it, whereas he may have been mathematically dull in school. Type-setting is excellent training, of great value in many occupations in after life; of value, too, in the use of English. Proof-reading is better yet, since it is splendid training for the powers of observation; there is some opportunity for the exercise of literary taste; it teaches the art of punctuation, and is helpful in the choice and use of words. All branches of newspaper work are of great educational value. The mastery of stenography not only trains and perfects the memory, but makes one a good listener, and is an unsurpassed method for the training of the attention. Telegraphy is valuable, but is not equal in scope to stenography. One whose training has been almost wholly of the practical kind says that he gained more genuine mental discipline through the mastery of telegraphy and stenography than through all his years of schooling.

Professor Münsterberg argues against letting a boy do what he chooses. In practical life there are sure to be contingencies which counteract the elective system in a far better way than by any method of human devising. The compulsory breaking away from a favourite environment, because a boy's parents decide to move to another State, is an

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illustration. The death of the father, which compels a boy or girl to leave an ideal situation for one that is more remunerative is, as everybody knows, oftentimes the making of a man or woman.

Again, there are situations like this. A young man enters the newspaper business and gradually rises to the position of business manager. The subscription list is placed in his care. He counts the names and also learns the actual number of papers printed per week—less than one half the boasted circulation! He complains to the proprietor, and is told that a paper which does not keep up with the deceits of its contemporaries will be left behind in the race. The young man finds it easier and easier to deceive until he reaches a point where he knows that he will soon deceive unconsciously. What shall he do—permit prevarication and commercialism to become second nature, or resign, foregoing a large salary? The decision comes quickly if he thinks, unless — terrible thought! — it means starvation for wife or mother.

Thus practical life may be trusted to provide man-making opportunities. In school or out, no one can escape these. As one looks back upon deprivations which seemed hard at the time, and upon disappointments which were almost unbearable, one sees that a Wisdom has presided over events in a marvellous way.

It may seem a long break from systematic study to omit the high school, and many will question whether the taste for learning will ever be quickened.

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But if there be somewhat which demands expression, it will be aroused. And when the awakening comes, the years of practical experience which brought one in close contact with real life, with the wage-earning class and with the struggle for existence, will be of incalculable value. No experience is profitless when the soul comes to consciousness.

Yet I would emphasise the need of placing before every boy and girl those opportunities and books which are likely to call out the soul during those crucial years variously called " the age of conceit," " the age of reason," and " the soul's awakening." If the awakening soul is surrounded by idealising influences and given the right books, years of diffusion of force may be avoided. For if the taste for better things is then quickened, the mind is not likely to turn aside into morbid channels or the wiles and subtleties of baneful literature.

It may interest the reader to know what books brought the awakening in a given case. The instance is that of a young man who for years had no ambition beyond the business in which he was employed, where he hoped to attain the highest level, —an occupation totally at variance with all hereditary tendencies,— but who matured late and apparently suffered no serious loss. I will let him tell the story in his own words, as nearly as I can recollect them.

" I am amazed," said my friend, " when I recollect how ignorant I was during those business years of that which, according to Macaulay, ' every

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schoolboy knows.' Macaulay's schoolboy was a prodigy, to be sure, but I did not possess a third of such a boy's knowledge. In school I had stood at the head of my class in spelling and geography, but at the foot in arithmetic, and history I had not studied at all. I had read almost nothing outside of school. I was ignorant even of the names of the standard authors. My work was closely confining, I had no society, and when, owing to the plans of my parents, I was forced to leave the little town where I worked, it was many months before I became reconciled to my new social situation. But when I discovered the world of literature, how sudden and complete the change!

" It all began with Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, which I studied in an elocution class, and with Lowell's *Among my Books* and *My Study Windows*, which I read simply because I had seen the titles in a game of authors. Once started, I did not stop. I read every word that Shakespeare wrote, and many of the commentaries on his plays. Lowell's essays quickened interest in other poets, and I read through nearly all the great poets, and read their biographies. Thus one book led to another by a process of natural suggestion.

" Then, in a fortunate hour, a friend gave me two volumes of Emerson's *Essays*, and shortly afterwards my doom was sealed. I read every word of Emerson, and every book about him. I read Emerson's favourite authors, and these sent me to more. This reading also raised for me the great problems of

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philosophy, religion, and science, and I read such works as Lewes's *Biographical History of Philosophy*, and James Freeman Clarke's *Ten Great Religions;* later, Berkeley, Martineau, Darwin, Huxley, Wallace, Le Conte, John Fiske, and the works of many other scientific and philosophical writers. I became, in fact, a very general reader, laying the foundations, unwittingly, of a general education."

This opportunity for general reading is one of the best in a free educational experiment. If one is free to read what the higher self dictates, the books thus chosen are sure to be remembered; they are read as literature, not as text-books for examination purposes, and in later years, when one must be a specialist, the knowledge thus gained will be turned to account in unsuspected ways. I have proved this from personal experience, and next to the influences of home life and the practical training in the business world, I would place the years of unhampered reading of great authors, an experience which, in my own case, was largely quickened by Emerson.

Best of all, in these formative years when one wanders at will through the treasure-house of books, if one begins to express the soul in some way, by keeping a journal, writing verse, sketching, composing, anything which gives play to the creative faculty, these years of wandering will assume specific shape and prepare the way for public service.

It is also essential that the religious nature be kept free from hampering influences. See to it that your son and daughter are not drawn into the church

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through a merely emotional experience. It were better that they should not attend church for a time than that they should sacrifice freedom of thought. When the soul's awakening comes, advise them to attend the services of every kind of church, and think for themselves. Place books where they are sure to find them which, like Lydia Maria Child's *Aspirations of the World*, or Clarke's *Ten Great Religions*, acquaint them with the fact that there are many religions besides Christianity. Your children may miss the advantages of membership in one church, but they will gain the inestimable advantage of membership in the church universal.

Again, travel, and especially foreign travel, acquaints one with self, shows what one knows and does not know, and quickens a deep desire for knowledge. In many an instance it has been the basis of what is known as the higher education. In my experiment it was foreign travel, combined with the years of general reading, which at twenty-two prompted the first desire for college training. Under such circumstances the college years are sure to be greatly beneficial. For the student is old enough to know his needs; he knows what he wants to study, he has seen something of life; and in a college like Harvard he can from the first elect those courses which his now rapidly developing individuality most keenly craves.

The business man will argue that it is absurd to let a boy wait until he is twenty-two before he even begins to prepare for college, and it may be absurd

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if a man is to be a mere money-maker. But if he is to be true to the spiritual ideal, is it not highly practical to wait until everything shall be turned to creative account ?

There are decided disadvantages in the postponement of the study of Greek and Latin until the age of twenty-two, but there are rich compensations. Xenophon, Cæsar, and Homer are studied as Lowell would have them read, namely, as literature. History is read as a part of human life, and science is turned to instant account as furnishing the most modern point of view.

To be sure, one may miss many of the pleasures of college sports and social life by entering college as late as twenty-four. On the other hand, there are few distractions, and one may give the mind more fully to the great ideals of intellect and Spirit.

There is perhaps nothing more important in educational work than learning to think. The habit once acquired, if one has been free from religious and other coercion, the tendency is not likely to stop short of entire intellectual and spiritual liberty. To the maturer student, college life comes as the natural complement of the previous years of free experiment and general reading. For under the Harvard elective system one may confine one's self to two or three subjects, even to one subject per year, and thus have time to do thorough, thoughtful work.

Ideally speaking, one should have far more special preparation for college than can be gained in the two

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or three years to which one is likely to be limited after the age of twenty. But there are all the advantages on the other side which we have considered in this chapter, and the majority of minds acquire the requisite knowledge very rapidly at this maturer period: they have learned how to work; they know what freedom from pressure is, and will not permit their energies to run to excess. Another advantage is found in the fact that if a favourite author, like Emerson, has quickened the spiritual nature, the intellect does not become supremely dominant, and education assumes that broader form which prepares the way for many-sided social life.

If the critic complains at this introduction of the Spirit, then let him and his followers pursue the conventional course. But everyone who has for years given play to his intellect, then tried to curb it, knows how strong is the tendency to become a mere scholar. The temptation is to study on and on, absorbed in mere technicalities; the true educational spirit has many other demands which a man is likely to hear if his ears be not over-fascinated by the enticements of the intellect.

Every man who has matured without the conventional school and college training would be other than he is had he been given that training, and no man can positively know which course would have led to the better results; for we know only by doing. But every man who understands himself knows what influences have helped him most, and it is a significant fact that so many who are unconventionally

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educated express their unwillingness to exchange their years of general reading and business experience for the best training a preparatory school could give.

The moral is easy. Raise the intermediate schools to a higher standard to meet the demands of those who are not fit subjects for the pressure system. Teach fewer subjects and teach them well. Prepare your scholars for a life of individual thought, and do not permit the demands of college entrance examinations to defeat the purposes of education.

Of all terrors in the educational world entrance examinations are the worst, and it is evident that something is wrong. Is it not unfair, for example, for the professor who is a genius in mathematics to select exceedingly difficult problems by which to test a boy's ability, then grant him barely fifty-five minutes in which to try to solve them? It is surely no demerit to fail, and it is no wonder that so many students enter college conditioned in mathematics. Examinations, after all, are the chief sources of the pressure system. What a relief it is to enter college where, in so many courses nowadays, one may substitute theses.

Emerson's advice to a college boy was: "Room alone and keep a journal." It is the spontaneous results of education which really show the progress a student has made. Every man who is alive to his opportunities is sure to give some sign of growth, and if he be not alive coercion will not make him so. But if Emerson was right, conventional

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education is largely wrong. Emerson assures us that education should be "as broad as man," and he had already defined each individual as a "new classification." "Cannot we let people be themselves, and enjoy life in their own way?" he exclaims. "You are trying to make that man another *you*. One 's enough."[1] You cannot tell what a boy or girl most needs any more than you can decide that he shall be a lawyer or a doctor. "That which a man can do best none but his Maker can teach him," again says our great seer.

Having said so much against high and preparatory schools, it is time to admit that they are not all as objectionable as the foregoing aspersions would suggest. I know a teacher in a high school in one of our largest cities who is triumphing over the pressure system by explicitly showing his boys that to pass the entrance examinations is a secondary end, the first being the attainment of power, the cultivation of concentration and self-control. He emphasises these higher ideals by placing "ideal suggestions" upon the blackboard for his pupils to copy, by explaining the functions of the subconscious mind, and by personal talks with each boy on purity and self-mastery. The results are excellent. There are probably many teachers who are winning the same triumph. There is surely every reason to encourage this reform within conventional ranks, every reason why the teacher should be spiritually as well as intellectually equipped.

[1] Essay on *Education*.

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Yet our chief concern in this chapter is still with "the misfit,"—the man who must unconventionally select his educational opportunities.

That man is said to be badly educated who educates himself, yet every thinker knows that in the best sense of the word education is fundamentally matter of self-development. It is what a man evolves out of his opportunities that counts, and it is almost commonplace nowadays to state that men who make their mark in the world are usually those who have come from the common walks of life and chosen opportunities which suited them — when it pleased them. Education, if it is to be "as broad as man," must take full advantage of this native tendency to originate, experiment, and take its own time; otherwise it is largely interference.

In the profoundest sense, no man ever transcends the relative, individual point of view. This being so, there is every reason to develop this point of view to the full, that it may mature through its own strength, contributing in fullest measure to the growth of other minds.

Man is by nature an imitative creature. This is a very strong reason why he should be encouraged to originate. Spontaneity and receptivity, leisure for experiment and meditation, are absolutely essential to originality. The highest that a man can do is taught him by a spontaneous revelation welling up, according to laws of its own, in the minds of those whose lives are consecrated to it. All consciousness, all training, all reading, should be

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subordinate to this revelation. Everything else should be a means, this is the end. This guidance is detailed, adequate, faithful. It speaks successively through instinct, desire, ambition, talent, intuition, genius. It applies to every possible situation. It exists for every soul. But in the majority it is ignored, misunderstood, and opposed. Hundreds of deflecting tendencies lead the mind away from it into pride, the glory of mere learning, egotism, and the rest.

A man must believe in himself if he is to turn his educational experiment to spiritual account. He must work out every problem for himself. He must be as free from authorities, whether books, teachers, or organisations, all of which he may make use of, as he is free from the bondages which conventional society seeks to impose.

Thus education becomes art for art's sake, work for work's sake, the pursuit of truth wherever it may lead. First, last, and always it is an experiment. It is illustrated by the life of the painter who is ever sketching and altering, to express a nobler ideal. It is seen in the striving of the musician to express the harmonies and melodies of sound; in the ambition of the poet, tirelessly working to attain perfection of form.

The critic now insists that such an experiment tends to create mere individualists. Not if it be thorough. Not if a man be truly an artist, really a scholar, a truth-seeker, one who knows his own mind and understands the laws of the universe.

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Emerson says: "We arrive at virtue by taking its direction instead of imposing ours." "Obedience alone gives the right to command." Thus education is adjustment between the individual and his environment, turning from side to side, from point to point, perspective to perspective. It is a continual weighing and testing, the development of self yet its correction, a balance between the subjective and the social consciousness. It must constantly be tempered by constructive criticism, and tested by controversy. All this is a part of the experiment. And the adjustment differs in every case.

The cultivation of sympathy is as important as the preservation of spontaneity. Education is incomplete nowadays unless it shows how the under half lives. The "constructive individuality" which is its aim, according to David Starr Jordan,[1] is the outcome of many tendencies, physical, intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual. It is a balance between heart and head. It supplements analysis by synthesis at that point where scepticism becomes merely negative. It forgets not love. It remembers that some things in life are meant to be enjoyed only. Poetry and music hold a permanent place in which scientific zeal is never permitted coldly to intrude. It is loyal to that which is essentially feminine and that which is distinctively masculine. In a word, it produces a man or a woman.

The grand result, then, of our experiment is to

[1] *Conservative Review*, November, 1899.

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enable a man so to interpret his individual experience and so to apply it, that his existence in the world shall be justified, that he shall be an honour both to God and to man.

In the light of this ideal, we may restate our definition of education as, the recognition of and co-operation with the immanent Spirit, on all planes of existence, as it is revealed through the individual consciousness of man. Or, we may define it as the training of the individual powers to the full, that through their progressive development the unique relation of each soul to God, nature, and society may find adequate expression. Thus defined, education is lifted out of the limited sphere in which it has so long been confined; and dignified, yes, made truly possible, by intimate association with the Highest in life.

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CHAPTER VII

THE EXPRESSION OF THE SPIRIT

There is only one thing better than tradition, and that is the original and eternal life out of which tradition takes its rise.—LOWELL.

IT is the fate of every idealist to be misunderstood. He sees somewhat which all men shall presently see, but just because his thought has seized a possibility which lies beyond present attainment, because he lacks the rational terms wherewith to clothe his ideals, he is deemed visionary and impractical, when in reality his doctrine is even more practical than the most common-sense ideas at present in vogue.

Such an ideal is now taking shape in the minds of some of our leading educators. Its aim is the expression of the soul quality in music, literature, and art. Not that this is essentially a new ideal, but that its advocates are seeking to make a great step in advance, to make the expression of the Spirit a more self-conscious pursuit. The more strenuous the endeavour to advance, the more vague the method seems to become. Yet vague as it is, one feels that there is a beauty here which indescribably surpasses the methods which it is displacing.

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In the world of music, for example, there are those who merely teach technique, whose performances are marvels of technical skill, and those, on the other hand, who play and sing from the soul. One cannot tell definitely what is lacking in the former class. But there is a quality which they do not possess. And so with all the technique which the talented can command there is absent that subtle somewhat without which music is scarcely musical.

In the intellectual world the contrast is equally striking. The educated man is, of course, eager to add to the sum of human knowledge, to make new inventions and discoveries. All this is legitimate, and there must be manual and intellectual training to meet these demands. In a certain sense education, strictly so-called, will always be intellectual. I am not pleading for a setting aside of these practical demands, nor am I asking that schools and colleges become the leading centres of religion. The plea is rather for the purification and enlargement of these purposes and methods, that they may be thoroughly in keeping with the ideals of the Spirit.

Yet what avails the intellect without that training which, supplementing it, makes all technical power the instrument of the higher self? The training of the intellect is, as we have noted again and again, but one among many kinds of discipline, all of which must have proper consideration. Since education is the development of all the powers for the purposes of adequate self-expression, since it is based

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on self-knowledge and self-mastery, there must be discipline of all the tendencies in body and mind. The scholar who is still in subjection to tobacco is not fully a scholar. The teacher who is not master of his appetites is not yet worthy of imitation. Man is not half-trained if he lacks that health which freedom from vice, crowned by the attainment of all-round self-possession, alone can give. And the higher ideal which I am now suggesting does not even begin to be realised until this purity of life, this freedom from stimulants, vices, and the habits of the merely intellectual man, becomes the foremost characteristic of daily life.

All the training one may possibly have, all the intellect, all the talent, the self-knowledge, the technical skill, all the self-conscious powers one may possess, are secondary to that grander purpose to which these must be consecrated if one desires to be truly an artist, truly an orator or musician. It is as if, having spent years and years in training the organism one should say, in all humility, " I dedicate myself to thee, O Spirit, whence springs all life and power; do with them, do with me, what thou wilt. Henceforth I will live and think for the glory of the whole, for the beauty and grandeur of the great universal."

Thus does the true artist, the real lover of truth, beauty, and virtue, consecrate himself that he may become an instrument of divine revelation. He seeks oneness with that invisible presence which ever surrounds the soul, that he may first of all

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assimilate from the Spirit, that he may be imbued afresh with that creative life whence springs all that is original and inspiring in the world. The spiritual method is thus confessedly an emulation of the divine method of creation.

The method of God, so far as we may read it in the inner history of man, is first the spirit, then the form; first the involution about which we hear so little, then the evolution about which we read so much. The highest human method is therefore adaptation to this progressive quickening of God, and harmony with its resultant unfolding. If the Spirit is constantly welling into consciousness through a new moment, the ideal is, of course, to penetrate as near as possible to the fountain head of the Spirit, fully and freely to voice that revelation even though its message differs from that of all previous experiences. It is this quickening, creative life which is the highest source of the originality for which we have contended in the foregoing chapter, the surest guide to genius, so far as the cultivation of genius comes within the province of self-consciousness.

It has been obvious throughout that the free expression of this spontaneous revelation is greatly hindered by formal plans, set programmes, and prearrangements. Ideally, both the speaker and the writer should be committed only to the Spirit.

At the risk of seeming to make common the sacred and poetical, I venture the suggestion that with this dedication of self to "the glory of the whole," one

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should put the mind in a special mood, lifting the soul to the plane of the universal in an attitude of worship or prayer. Rise above yourself, rise above your anticipated audience to that height where, one in consciousness with the Spirit, your entire being is offered in deepest humility to the Father.

Thus, by the power of association, this form of words, " for the glory of the whole," or a similar phrase, will at any time serve to put the mind into the receptive mood. Such a phrase is a powerful suggestion, acting upon the subconscious mind with searching, prayerful life, and presently bringing forth results limited in power only by the earnestness of the consecrated appeal. The mind is thus put in touch with the undifferentiated Spirit, when it is not yet either distinctively love or reason, beauty, harmony, or truth, but all of these. Then the Spirit will voice itself in melody or harmony, as love, reason, truth, all that is beautiful, according to the temperament of the listener.

The close observer will detect this receptive waiting on the part of the great artist, or the speaker who expresses the Spirit. More and more this ideal is taking hold of the growing minds of the day. Singing teachers are aiding their pupils to voice the soul, and pianists are discarding conventional methods and seeking to voice the inner spiritual mood.

No one will be troubled by unpleasant self-consciousness and shyness who rises to the universal plane. Here all is for the Spirit, and there is no time to think of self. The thought of self belongs

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to the hours and days of training, when one necessarily delves deeply into temperament, laws, and principles. But when the hour of performance arrives the time is too sacred to spend in thinking what people will say, in fear lest one may not be seen or heard to good advantage.

Perfect wisdom, love, beauty, harmony, and all the virtues spring from this creative world of the unvoiced Spirit. If a man would be great, let him listen here. If a man would progress, let him return here day by day as eagerly as if he had never come before. If a man's life is thus dedicated to the expression of these inmost promptings, he is likely at any time to become the recipient of ideas of which he knew almost nothing until they took shape in words under his pen, or in the act of addressing an audience.

All whose desire is to penetrate the mystery of the human mind are conscious at times that this creative world is larger than their fullest and profoundest consciousness. Soar as we may into the realms of speculation, pursue our thought as we will in the endeavour to chain it fast in language which everyone shall understand, an undefined, unwordable residuum forever eludes us. We seem like one encased in a shell, wherein we may study and inculcate our theory as we wish, but beyond which we never go except in the vaguest way. In these vague moments—vague because they are unwordable visions—we realise the futility of mere speculation. If we could once break through the shell of individual

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consciousness, our whole thought would be instantly changed by the grander light from this realm of the creative Spirit which is beyond yet within all forms, all particular modes of manifestation.

Yet it is important to remember that many of the ideas which spring suddenly from this creative realm — given us by spirits, as some think — are self-suggestions. We are reading a paper or listening to a friend, and an idea occurs to us which we would like to realise, but which we dismiss so quickly that all remembrance of it is lost. But our deeper self remembers it; and in due time the idea comes forth full-fledged from the creative world, apparently new, and causing us to wonder whence it came. It is probable that all merely human thought is governed by suggestion in some form. The impulses which we feel that we must obey, and which seem like a separate mind commanding us, are only a suburban portion of ourselves, the richest and noblest portion of which is this subconscious creative receptivity, which in reality is the chief organ of all inspiration.

As we have noted in a foregoing chapter, there are days when the mind is in a constructive mood, when every thought is valuable, when the right word eagerly comes to fit the right place. No analysis of ours can fully account for these days. The utmost we can say is that we supplied the subconscious mind with part of the data and sent out a prayer for light, but that the synthetic process is as mysterious as the combination of powers and substances known as physical life. The mind marvels at its

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own powers on such days. It is for the time being an instrument of the creative genius, and all else is secondary to the act of transformation from spirit to form, from fragmentary ideas and facts to inductive result.

Nevertheless, there are times when the best way to clarify one's ideas for literary purposes is to express them to another in conversation, for in this way one discovers the treasured resources of creative subconsciousness. As man is a social being, his powers work to their full when with his fellows, or at least when preparing to address or help his fellows. One interview or discussion with an interested listener will oftentimes furnish material for an entire essay or chapter. Oftentimes one does not know what to believe on a certain subject until asked to state one's views. Then the slumbering subconscious becomes conscious, and one is surprised to find the mind in possession of a well-matured doctrine.

One should make at least an abstract of the discussion immediately afterward. Strike while the iron is hot. Write while you are most interested. And write at a heat, so to speak. That is, write first to express the thought, then criticise the English at your leisure. Have pencil and paper always with you, that no important idea may escape. Make note of an idea, even if it be but a single sentence. The chances are that this sentence will suggest another, and that a third, until you have produced several paragraphs.

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It is undoubtedly true that he who writes well must write much. The young writer should not be discouraged if all of his earliest productions find their way into the waste-basket. There must be a survival of the fittest in the literary world; and, if many notes and essays are destroyed before anyone but their author has read them, they will at least serve their purpose as practice work.

It is well, even after college days, to keep a journal in which notes on a great variety of subjects may be made. If the notes are of no apparent value at the time, a time may come when they will fit in admirably with later thoughts. Notes made at intervals of many months or years are found to belong together, and those whose minds work inductively will often discover unexpected wealth in this accumulated material. It is frequently the latest and profoundest thought which unifies all the rest.

All manuscripts should be put away to "season."[1] After a few weeks or months have elapsed, the mind will readily see what to add and what to strike out, what is written in the Spirit and what is not. Emerson is reported to have said that the secret of his style was "striking out." One does not like to sacrifice fine-sounding phrases immediately after they are written. But, when the pen has cooled, one's courage is stronger.

The best writing is sometimes that which is most

[1] Tennyson is said to have put some of his poems aside for ten years of seasoning.

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easily written. Commit your thought to the subconscious mind. Let it germinate, and await its maturity. You will then produce a better piece of work than by sheer labour. The subconscious mind has a power of combining even dry facts in a manner which the conscious mind can seldom equal. It is therefore one of the secrets of successful literary work to study the workings of the subconscious mind and to rely upon it to perform a large share of the toil.

The conventional method of literary production is to consult authorities, copy quotations, ask advice, compel the brain to think by reasoning from premises to conclusions, arrange the data under various heads, divisions, and subdivisions, then work the brain, revise, and rewrite. The result is fairly satisfactory, but it possesses little originality.

In the creative subconscious process, on the other hand, there is gradual assimilation of all that is thought day by day, and trustful brooding over the subject at hand. Then a day comes when one awakens with a strong desire to write upon that specific theme. The essay comes forth out of a full mind. It is original. It possesses fresh life. All that one knows has been worked in. Passages in some forgotten journal, or stray notes made at different times, are found to belong with it. And lo and behold! it is as rational, as systematic as though it had been consciously arranged under various heads and subdivisions. Better still, it possesses that carrying power which only the Spirit can impart.

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In the same way, the subconscious mind prepares for an extemporaneous address. Many speakers find that they must read their essays and lectures at first. As they become more accustomed to speaking, brief notes only are required. After a time the leading points, impressed on the mind shortly before, are sufficient. Finally, when the subconscious mind is trained so that all this is performed without effort, the address flows out of a full mind, its leading ideas combined by the spirit of the occasion.

Authorities differ in regard to the merits of extempore speaking. Yet to be true to the inspirations of the Spirit, one must speak only when, and only as long as, the soul is moved. Write only when you have something to say, when you are fully in the mood. If the mood changes ere the composition be finished, wait until the moving comes again. If you awaken in the morning with no desire to write on the same theme which absorbed you the day before, give yourself to the new mood. It is of little avail to write on one subject while another continually and with greater interest constantly wells up from the subconscious.

Write for truth's sake, because you have something to say. Do not "descend to meet" a particular audience, or write with a certain critic in mind. Write, if for anyone, for the average reader.[1]

[1] Many of the suggestions given in Chapter XI. also apply to literary composition, and the standards of Chapter XII. are literary tests.

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Make notes of ideas at once, even if important matters must be put aside until you register your impression. Ideas are more important than things, and it is worth while to secure them as they pass. Our impressions are most valuable when they are most vivid.

Do not write too long at a time. Discover your best hours for work, and permit no serious interruption. But devote the remainder of the day to other interests, to books, people, and out-of-door exercise. The morning hours are probably the sanest hours for literary work. Many find them the hours when one may work with least fatigue. But the inspiration for the morning's work often comes the evening before.

Stop when you come to the end, and do not spin out to fill space. Anti-climaxes should not see the light in print. Do not pad or permit redundancies to pass. Remember that thousands of authors write verbosely, but only a few as Emerson wrote.

It is well to choose Emerson as a model of style, in connection with careful reading of authors who, like Lowell or Addison, wrote a fuller style. James Martineau is a master of smooth-flowing style. His sentences are artistic marvels, very suggestive from the point of view of choice and variety of words. It is advisable also to read the great poets, both as masters of brevity and in order to enlarge one's vocabulary.

Spare no pains to attain a good style. It is worth all time spent upon them to polish one's manuscripts

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before they are submitted to a printer. A manuscript should be put into its final form before it is set in type; for typographical changes are not only expensive, but mar the beauty of a composition.

Do not write primarily for money if you would do your best work. Money will come if you have really said something. If you have not, you do not want it.

Do not hasten into print. Wait as long as you can. Keep out of fiction if possible. It is said that every writer thinks he can write a novel, but many cannot.

If you have planned a book, let the plan subconsciously season. If you have written one, lay it aside and note the result. Do not repeat in a second book what you said in the first. It will lack inspiration. Let each book stand on its own feet, as if you had not produced another. Do not lean on the reputation earned by your most popular book. Quote seldom. Give credit for borrowed ideas.

I have drawn my illustrations chiefly from the art of literary production. But so far as the above principles are true they apply, with adaptation, to all arts. All who manifest the Spirit may become artists if they will. It is almost as essential to finish a literary phrase rhythmically as to take time to complete a musical phrase. Discordant word phrases are less noticeable perhaps, but they are as quickly detected by an expert as discord in music. The great singer cherishes her voice as a divine gift. So should all art be grounded in the Spirit, taking its cue in minutest detail from that inner guidance which is the choicest possession of the soul.

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CHAPTER VIII

AN IDEAL SUMMER CONFERENCE

To act now, not according to our poor human statutes and conventions, but according to the higher perfect law that we know only within our own breast; to live here as the citizen of an ideal kingdom—that, it seems to me, were the proudest distinction a man could crave.—W. M. SALTER.

AN attractive physical environment—green fields, hills, running streams, or a lake, and a grove of pines.

A spiritual centre created by a company of congenial souls, drawn together on a purely impersonal basis, in search of truth, the Spirit.

No merely formal programme, no mere isms, no fads, no personality worship, no exclusiveness, no favouritism; and no prejudicial influence supported by those whose money secures a hearing for favoured beliefs.

A cordial invitation to all who are attracted to come, either to speak or to listen, provided they are prompted by the spirit of impartial love and unbiassed research.

No restrictions placed upon any teacher whose work is positive, constructive, universal.

Impromptu meetings and informal discussions,

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unfettered by a predetermined subject or prearranged plan, participated in by those who are drawn together in the Spirit.

Occasional discussions conducted by those who speak from the Spirit, for the better understanding of the spiritual realities of life, the spiritual law, and the spiritual method, that the work of the school may be kept impersonal, that it may pursue "the strait and narrow way," avoiding deviations into occultism and negative criticism.

For those who desire it, systematic instruction in the fundamental principles of universal spiritual philosophy, conducted by those who are not bound by loyalty to any particular creed, sect, terminology, name, organisation, club, church, or religion.

Informal discussion of manifold practical methods for the realisation of the Spirit in all departments of daily life: the home, marriage, business, the care and healing of the sick, society, physical culture, art, science, literature, charity work, the labour problem.

Talks with teachers, with special reference to the application of the Spirit in education.

Nature studies and talks with children in regard to the laws of spiritual creation.

Talks with mothers on the spiritual creative principle, prenatal influence, and the home life.

Philosophical talks for authors, thinkers, clergymen, and scientific men.

Daily recreation and physical exercise for all who desire it. Daily social gathering.

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Occasional gatherings of those who are interested to start other centres on a similar basis.

One ideal in all departments: the expression of the Spirit through the individual soul.

One method: the law of spiritual unfolding from within.

One test: harmony with the inner promptings of the Spirit, unfettered by personal leadership, financial considerations, influential advice, or personal ambition.

As a practical application of the educational and philosophical ideal of this book, let us suppose that a beginning has been made in the development of a conference such as above suggested. A company of people is assembled under a group of pines on a beautiful New England hillside, overlooking a peaceful valley. There are clergymen, teachers, authors, artists, musicians, and those who can be classified only as independent truth-seekers. No one has been persuaded to come. All have met with a common interest to discuss the problems of life, because they have accepted the above ideal; and no one has come with the belief that his particular theory is the truth, while others possess only opinions. The meeting is the first of the session, and, as we take our places and listen, is being addressed by the truth-seeker who called the conference together.

. . . . . .

This beautiful new day is typical, my friends, of the great purpose which has brought us together

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here, beneath the pines and far from the noise and confusion of city life. The earth and trees have been washed clean by a fresh rain, and all Nature welcomes the glad sunlight in anticipation of the beauties of the day. And so we assemble here to await the new revelations of that great Light which shines upon us from the spiritual world, making ourselves receptive in community of desire and oneness of spirit, that we may in every way be mutually helpful as we study the laws and problems of the higher education.

I have not called you here in a spirit of leadership. As every soul differs from all other souls, and as every experience is rich in messages of its own, so the point of view of each one present necessarily differs from that of every other. We are here to receive the light each may throw on our common problems. The truth, we believe, is so large and deep that it somehow needs us all. Therefore, all leadership is absorbed in and transcended by the spirit of equality, the only spirit in which all may meet to fullest advantage.

We have agreed to study life in the making; it is making in the minds of each of us to-day. Let us investigate, then, with minds as open and free as if we had never speculated, surely as free as if we had received no theoretical inheritance from the past.

My only thought in appointing myself the first speaker is to make a beginning, which must of course be made by some one, in the formulation of the issues before us.

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Without doubt, all the reform movements of the present time may be summed up under the head of one grand ideal, freedom. The higher socialism seeks to set free the masses, and grant them equality of privilege. Philanthropists are seeking to free mankind from bondage to vice with all the torments it brings. The advocates of liberal religion are working to emancipate man from superstition, dogmatism, intolerance, creed, and ritual. Woman is seeking to free her fellow-woman. The spiritual movement of the time is toward the freedom of the soul, liberty and equality of individuality; it is setting people free from doctors, medicines, diseases, and all the burdens of fear, ignorance of self, and mental servitude. And it is because of our belief in universal freedom that each of us has come here, where we have thrown aside the trammels of conventionality, to commune in entire liberty of spirit.

Let us consider to-day some of the reasons for believing in universal freedom before we ask how we may emancipate humanity. The idea of freedom, broadly conceived, is in itself a profound inspiration. Once set men to thinking about it, and you shall see abundant results. For the bondage of bondages is ignorance, lack of thought. Courage to think, willingness to think, lies at the foundation of all growth. And all that we need to do in order to see the results each of us desires coming swiftly to humanity is to stimulate philosophical thought. That is, I express it as my sincerest conviction that every man, if he takes thought, will turn his powers

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in the higher direction, for humanity instead of for self; that no man is at heart perverse.

As we look over these smiling fields and once more ask ourselves the great question of the ages, Whence came we and why are we here? we realise that there are many of us, that the earth is large, and the answer must be broad and inclusive. I cannot say, as I ask the great question, that the earth is mine, because I am not the first occupant here. I may strive with my brother, and imprison him; but the fact remains that he has as good a right as I to enjoy the earth and to ask the great question. The fact even that the few have for ages made war upon the many and enslaved them does not alter the eternal fact that the earth, by virtue of our co-existence, is the home of all, the property of all, and that no company of men can rightfully exclude other men from its privileges.

Approaching the problem from the universal point of view, therefore, it is evident that every man, woman, and child has a right to life, the use of the land and that which sustains life. No man, no trust, no state, no nation, has a right to deprive man of life, liberty, or that which is necessary for the sustenance of life. The land and its products are not and cannot in deepest truth become the property of the few.

No man has a right to hold slaves.

No parent owns a child.

No husband owns a wife.

Every man, woman, and child, of whatever nation

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or colour, has a right to freedom of individuality in thought and conduct.

The fact that such freedom is not universally enjoyed to-day is no argument against these eternal principles. The selfish greed of the earth's masters simply indicates that the significance of man's presence on the earth among countless millions possessing equal rights as human souls has not been fully apprehended. And so, without condemnation of those who sin against it, we simply state the law that

If a man, woman, or child desires the freedom of individuality, not all the nations of the world have the right to take it away.

If a people desires self-government, no nation has a right to deprive it of liberty. This principle applies to Orientals, Africans, and all so-called inferior races.

Wars of conquest are utterly wrong. All warfare is barbaric. The civilised nation arbitrates, reasons.

Government should be by the whole people.

Matters of general public concern should be submitted to the people. No representatives should have the right to plunge a nation into war.

All government positions should be filled on the basis of merit, as a sacred trust from the whole people.

If any persons become dangerous to the community, they should be confined only so far as the safety of the community demands, not deprived of

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those opportunities which make for self-development and mastery over the conditions which rendered coercion necessary. No state should have the right to commit murder under the guise of "punishment."

The right to labour and enjoy the rewards of labour belongs to all. Freedom to experiment and develop beyond the masses, through the use of greater resources, is the right of the more talented only so far as this activity contributes to or does not interfere with the labour of others.

Scenery and the wonders and beauties of nature should be free to all; and no company of men, even if they hold "deeds" to the land, have a right either to deprive it of its forests or other beauties unless by the consent of all who dwell in or near the region. In such cases it is supposed that beauty is secondary to utility. But, generally speaking, anything which renders nature attractive to man is to be faithfully preserved.

The resources of the earth rightfully belong to all mankind, without monopoly and at the least expense.

The power of money is not ultimate. It is a medium of exchange by which man has evolved the unequal social conditions of to-day, and is rightly used only when taken to represent the least expense at which articles essential to our common development can be produced.

The products of the earth, of manual labour and mental toil, were intended for all men. They have been temporarily used as means to business ends

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only because man has been largely ignorant of humane ends.

If business, social, educational, parental, marital, and other relationships interfere with the development of individuality, they are so far wrong. Man should be free to think for himself, educate himself, choose his occupation, select his wife. He should grant the same freedom to all in accordance with one moral standard for both sexes.

The home life should be adapted to the growth of individual experiment and character.

All educational facilities should be open to the choice of those who care to use them.

The highest office of the intellectual teacher is to persuade people to think for themselves.

The function of the minister is to inspire the untrammelled worship of the free soul. The fetters now imposed in the name of religion indicate only the ignorance of the great ideal of freedom of those who impose them.

The environment of earth, society, and the world of mind is calculated to develop to the full the individuality of each. But in order that this may be, as man is a social being, there must be recognition of this ideal both on the part of society and on the part of the individual. For, as society is an organism, and its members both individually incomplete and socially supplementary, the freedom of man, either individually or collectively, is possible only through mutual understanding and mutual help.

The realisation of all that society is to man should

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make him profoundly grateful, as his presence on earth should make him rejoice. It should also inspire that earnest work of emancipation which, beginning at home, should extend itself to one's immediate associates, then spread abroad for the benefit of all mankind.

The individual and collective emancipation of humanity being, then, the real meaning of all the struggles through which we pass, it follows that the most far-reaching work of reform is that which most directly brings man to consciousness of his privileges as a member of the social organism.

What is needed as the outcome of this conference is workers who, imbued with this great ideal of social liberty, shall do everything in their power to awaken mankind to a knowledge of freedom.

We who are here are doubtless bound in many ways, and I who speak to you may have unwittingly insisted upon just my theory of freedom. The conference is therefore open to other statements of the great problem before us. For we must first agree upon the ideal before we can consider methods for its realisation.

. . . . . .

The first day's session is closed with an animated discussion of different conceptions of freedom, and the difficulties to be met in persuading men to transmute the selfish spirit of monopoly into the loftier spirit of altruism. It is found that one of the chief difficulties is this: The law of natural evolution is the survival of the strongest, who push the weakest

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to the wall. The Anglo-Saxon, believing himself the superior man, thinks he is carrying out his "manifest destiny," the work of nature, by conquering the lower races, unmindful of the fact that "might makes right" is only the law of animal man, that there is a higher law, the law of ethics and the Spirit. The discussion, therefore, points to the universal quickening of ethical thought as the panacea for the ills from which our civilisation now suffers, the wide acceptance of the great precept, "Live and let live."

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CHAPTER IX

THE MINISTRY OF THE SPIRIT

When I watch that flowing river which, out of regions I see not, pours for a season its streams into me, I see that I am a pensioner; not a cause, but a surprised spectator of this ethereal water; that I desire and look up, and put myself in the attitude of reception, but from some alien energy the visions come.—EMERSON.

LET us suppose that our summer conference has been in session one month. All phases of the social question have been under discussion and many practical remedies have been proposed. But the time has come when the question in all hearts is, Whence shall come the motive power which is to stir humanity to knowledge of the great truths thus far agreed upon? It is Sunday, and the members of the conference are assembled beneath the pines in worshipful silence. Scarcely a sound breaks the restful stillness as the speaker approaches who is to propose the first answer to the burning question. The speaker takes his place, then rises to address the conference, standing for a moment or two in rapt contemplation before opening his lips to speak. He speaks as follows, but we can give only the words. The absorbed attention with which he is

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heard suggests that a presence is felt beyond all power of words to describe.

. . . . . .

If we could see as the Spirit sees, if we could see even as those exalted souls regard us who have attained the greater heights of the spiritual world, we should doubtless learn that a wealth of wisdom, a world of peace, and a great heart of love, await us; but we are too active to receive. Therefore as we meet here once more beneath the pines, this glad summer day, our hearts yearning for spiritual life and wisdom, let us listen as we never listened before, in community of spirit, in oneness of aspiration, with renewed dedication to the promptings and ideals of the Spirit.

Peace, be still! Let all problems rest for a time. Let all anxiety cease. Be not so eager. Be trustful, restful, contemplative, gradually turning in consciousness beyond all that troubles the heart and disturbs the mind to that abode where the soul feels its oneness with eternity, looking before and after as if time were naught. Become centred there. Live and breathe in that purer region. Open the entire being in the attitude of assimilative listening. Peace, be still!

There is a living water which shall quench the thirst of the soul. There is a living food whereof the soul may eat and be truly fed. All about us here to-day, in and around every heart that beats and every soul that thinks, there is a power, a wisdom, a love ready to fill and to guide the soul, if

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only it be approached in that childlike attitude of perfect trust which opens the faculties and prepares the way for its coming.

By cultivating peace, serenity, receptivity, by turning day by day to the one source whence all power springs, each of us may become a centre of distribution of spiritual life so that we may carry it to the sorrowing and the afflicted, to the ignorant and the darkened who cannot see, each of us may give that food which nourishes and that water which quenches. But each must say, at least in spirit, as he enters the eternal abode to be filled with this quickening power: Not as I will, but as thou wilt, O Father! Of myself I know not. Thou knowest. I leave all. I offer all. I am willing to endure all. Only quicken and guide me, that I may be in deepest truth thy holy messenger.

To possess and to manifest this spiritual power—this, my friends, is the solution of the problems we consider here. There is no need to speculate. It is futile to ask how the churches shall be filled, if you continue to cling to forms and ceremonies. It is of little avail to ask how missionary and charity work shall become truly effectual, so long as you are unwilling to abandon pet theories and methods. There is but one way to meet all the demands of the thousands who are now dissatisfied; and that is, to become ministers of the Spirit. The people are hungry, and must be fed. If you do not abandon all and go where that cometh which feedeth all, you must see your occupations passing from you, while

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others shall be raised up who will utter what you do not dare.

The minister of the future will be one who, first having attained the spiritual plane, has the courage to abandon himself to the spontaneous upwellings of the Spirit. He must speak for the Spirit, not for the congregation. If not moved to make a prayer or preach a sermon, let him declare the presence of the Spirit as seems most fitting at the time. If he can no longer read the service or repeat the creed, let these pass.

There is a prayer which no words can utter, there is a sermon no lips can preach, a service which never assumed a visible form. It is the aspiration of the soul, the power of a dedicated life, the presence of quickening love. When that power speaks through the soul, although it finds no utterance in words, it reaches far and wide. When that power speaks, all men and women, of whatever creed, listen. When that power speaks, there is no question in regard to the effect of one's doctrine, no doubt whether one shall be provided with daily bread. Obstacles vanish, persecution ceases, critics are silenced, all the world gives ear. For, when that power speaks, the Spirit speaks.

My friends, the Spirit really lives. It is here. It knows our needs. It can conquer all things. Only seek it. Only dedicate your souls to its spontaneous revelation.

We must live a simple life if we would be thus quickened. There must be ample time for unpre-

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meditated listening. There must be measureless unselfishness.

The singer, listening to the Spirit before he sings, may pour forth in soulful song that transcendent harmony which speaks to the heart. The poet may suggest its presence in his verse. The author, writing only when the Spirit moves, will find that a greater than he has written. The speaker, turning aside from his audience in renewed dedication, will lose all self-consciousness, and find that his hearers are touched where no foresight of his could have touched them. The clergyman, casting aside his dogmas, will be moved to utter those sweet messages of peace which really comfort the bereaved heart. The artist may paint its beauties. The pianist may play as never master of technique has played. And, noblest of all, the father and mother may make the home a Christ home, a centre of that creative love whence springs a nobler generation.

Each of you has some gift like those I have named. Each of you has a message for the world. Reverence that gift, believe in that message, then trust all else to the Father. You are trying to solve that which is insoluble while you regard your work from the merely human point of view. Your hearts are touched with pity; yet you dwell on the conditions, and not on the end to be attained, through the sufferings of the world. One alone knows the way. Through spiritual inspiration does he alone declare it. Spiritual ends are highest. Spiritual ideals triumph over all. What is spiritual

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must ever be spiritually discerned. Therefore make the supreme leap of faith, even where all the way is dark.

For our souls are bathed in a spiritual atmosphere: a spiritual sunlight falls upon them. Here and now — yes, truly, here, in this living present — we dwell in the spiritual world. There is a realm in which the Spirit is directly manifested, without the media to which we are accustomed in the flesh. There is also in us a faculty by the exercise of which we may draw power from thence. It is the function of this faculty to open, as the petals and leaves of a plant open. The sensation of receiving power is accompanied by a sentiment of reverence, a feeling of sacred humility and worship.

The grandeurs and beauties, the peace and joy of this environing world, no words can reveal. But oh that words could prove to all mankind that this spiritual world exists! Oh that every sorrowing heart could feel its comfort, that every sufferer could be restored by its peace!

My words may sound extravagant to you. I may have utterly failed even to suggest the real message I would bring to you to-day. But where my words fail the Spirit will speak. Let us therefore try once more together in silence to feel that surrounding Presence.

Peace, be still! Forget all else but the Spirit. In calmness and repose send out your thought in all directions into the great universe. Unite in consciousness with that finest, inmost Essence which

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fills all space, entering into its peace, contemplating its beauty, resting in its encompassing love.

[The speaker becomes absorbed in thought as his words become ever gentler, with moments of waiting between sentences. An expression of sweet peace rests upon his face, and his hearers are lifted by the power which radiates from him as he concludes. . . . As if oblivious of all present, he at length voices his thought.]

O Power whence cometh all the energy which stirs this universe, O Wisdom which guides all the activities of men, O Love which unites all hearts to thee, unto thee I dedicate anew all that is in me. Unto thee I open my soul anew, that it may be filled with thy peace, that it may be inspired by thy love. Guide me, that I may be faithful to thy presence. Many times I forget, and then humbly return to thee. Many times we have each and all forgotten even here where we have assembled to learn thy law. But we would be true, we would ever manifest thee. And so we begin again with a zeal unknown before, yet a zeal which inspires us in stillness, in that far inner world where all souls are near, whence all our noblest deeds arise. . . . As we go, one and all, in silence, when the soul of each is moved, let us bear with us the Presence which has been with us to-day. Let us walk with that peace which has filled our souls, and forget not that love which has drawn us together as fellow-workers in the greatest of all spheres in all the universe, the kingdom of the Spirit. Peace, peace, peace!

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CHAPTER X

THE MYSTERY OF PAIN AND EVIL

Could we raise the veil that enshrouds eternal truth, we should see that behind nature's cruelest works there are secret springs of divinest tenderness and love.—JOHN FISKE.

ONE of the profoundest discoveries possible to the human mind is the fact that all our knowledge is relative to individual experience or consciousness; that as we are, so is our particular world. At first sight, seemingly limiting our powers beyond all hope of gaining satisfactory information about life, knowledge of this relativity is in truth the only sound basis of systematic thought. For as long as we please ourselves with the illusive fancy that absolute knowledge is possible, we overlook not only the deep significance of evolution but become continually involved in contradictions from which there is no hope of escape.

While a man believes in infallible inspiration, he dogmatises, asserts, and offers no real proof. But when he learns his true relationship to the universe, he discovers the glorious possibility, which we have considered in the foregoing chapter, of becoming a minister of the Spirit. He learns that just this

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apparently insuperable limitation is precisely that which enables him to manifest the Spirit as can no other man. Without relativity as a fundamental fact, education and philosophy are alike impossible. The very basis of religion is the worship by the part of the whole, the discovery by the finite that it is finite.

The limitations of finite consciousness are well illustrated by the relations of a plant in the sunlight. The plant can absorb from the sun's energy that alone which the capacity of its leaves permits. What it absorbs is taken into instant relation with what it already possesses; it becomes part of itself. In the same way the mind assimilates from a lecture, from travel, only what it is prepared to receive. All else is passed by as if it were naught.

Thus any inspiration partakes of the imperfections of the scribe. Even if biblical, it is given through a human organism, and is clothed in the language which happens to be native to the prophet, although its wisdom may in a measure surpass the comprehension of the recipient.

Again, the relativity of knowledge is illustrated by physical sensation. What is called colour is partly due to external vibration, partly to the structure of the eye: the sensation is a relative product. If all eyes were absent there would still be vibration. But what that vibration is in itself, apart from the percipient organism, no one knows. We know only the combined result in even the most definite of our visual experiences.

Likewise sound is known only in relation to the

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ears through which it is heard. Light, heat, and cold are such only for the organisms which perceive them. Injure the organism and the result will be altered. If we could greatly develop our senses, what wonders we might hear and see!

My knowledge of the world is merely what my experience has told me, and what I have learned from books and men. But what I learn from books and men is understood in relation to my particular intelligence. All that I know of my closest friend is what my experience with that friend has revealed. I cannot converse, read a book, witness a play, or listen to a lecture apart from my point of view.

Further, no two persons behold even the same physical object, for example, a tree; for what we behold is a mental picture or idea resulting from the sensations of colour, form, etc., gathered by our physical organisms. We assume that our idea is like the tree, but we do not know it, and cannot prove it. We know only our states of consciousness, and these are intelligible only so far as we have philosophised.

Let me soar into the sky, strike my hand against a rock, enter a trance, transmit thought, or lose myself in spiritual ecstasy; all these experiences are alike conditioned by what I am and what I have thought. If I am developed by them, the new thought necessarily enters into relation with the old. I can grasp only what my state of development permits. What may exist beyond, "in the air," on Mars, on Venus, I know not.

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This profound discovery, that experience is coloured by the state of mind and body of the recipient, and that therefore the recipient's state of development is the condition to be changed and not the external circumstance, has a very important bearing on the problems of pain and evil.

One frequently hears the remark that "somewhere in the universe there is a screw loose," or, "Had I been present at creation, I would have ordered things very differently." When questioned further, these critics of the universe confess their utter hatred of the present order of things. They complain bitterly at the existence of sorrow and pain, of evil and disease, which they always trace to some outside source. Man, they assure us, should have been created sound, virtuous, with knowledge of self and knowledge of the meaning of death. In other words, the ministry of suffering is deemed a dismal failure.

More persistent questioning reveals the fact that these critics have never come to judgment. They are constantly condemning others for wounding their feelings. They are in perpetual torment because animals and far-distant peoples suffer. Or they are numbered among those who, puffed up with the pride of family, atheistical, absorbed in a particular branch of study, have never opened wide their hearts to receive all men as brothers and all truth as one. In other words, they lack just this profound knowledge which we are considering in this chapter, that all experience is relative to the state of the recipient.

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Suppose for a moment that things had been ordered as one of these hypersensitive or aristocratic critics would have chosen. Suppose your own most fondly cherished Utopian scheme could have been substituted for the world-system now in vogue. Would the universe have been either perfect or painless, to say nothing of its habitability ?

What sort of life would man have lived had he been born perfect, wise, free from pain and the temptations of moral evolution ? Judging from what we know of life as it exists to-day, the man who is without the spur of suffering in some form does not think, does not grow. It is a law of life as we find it that man grows strong through contest and wise through victory. If philosophic thought goes with it, the man who has suffered most is the wisest, the most sympathetic, the most broadly helpful. Without the sharp pangs of pain, man is too easily contented to trouble himself about either self-development or the good of others. Had he been born perfectly sane and altruistic, life would have been very much like existence in the orthodox heaven with its monotonous psalm-singing along the golden streets, or the Buddhistic *Nirvana* where all work ceases.

Work is the glory of man, and the zest of work is that priceless conquest of obstacles which tests human ingenuity to the full. It is use alone which enables man either to add to, or to keep his strength. It is individual contact with and study of the great realities of life which alone teaches their meaning

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and worth. "Nothing venture, nothing have"; and, to venture, we must be ignorant of the outcome. If man could be told the sequel ere he began the story, life would lose all its zest. If he were simply "good," he would be very weak and uninteresting. Life would be like a perpetual summer with never a drop of rain, every living thing perfectly white, the same monotonous sound breaking upon the ear, no pleasure because no pain with which to contrast it, nothing doing because nothing to do, not even a problem to solve in the drearily identical state of mind of the poor inhabitants, who would be absolutely alike.[1] For relativity and contrast are essentials without which experience is impossible.

Or, try to imagine life organised on a painless basis so far as the mere activities of the body are concerned. There would then be no warning sensation of fatigue, nothing to show that Nature is repairing an injury or readjusting her forces after an excess; and, consequently, man would be in constant danger of maiming his body for life or causing instant death. For pain is primarily an indication that the natural rhythm, or equilibrium, of the body has been disturbed. In itself, it is perfectly good, beneficent. It is only man's misuse, ignorance, and infliction of it that has caused it to be accentuated into disease, and brought into such disrepute that it is ungraciously called "evil."

[1] For an able discussion of the law of contrast, see John Fiske, *Through Nature to God*. Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., 1899.

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A universe without this kind messenger of harmony and love would be utterly cruel and contemptible. Nothing in life is more directly meant for man's good and man's education, yet nothing has been more persistently misunderstood.

Could any arrangement be wiser than to have pain increase to the degree that man permits his attention to become absorbed by it, in so far as he opposes it, puts drugs or other obstructions in its way, or persists in his sensuous and other excesses? Does anything in life more plainly teach its lesson than this appealing, beneficent guardian, pointing out to man that all his diseases and moral struggles are the fruits of his own misconduct and his own ill-adjusted life?

Yet why should the warning be painful? some one asks. Because man would not give sufficient heed unless it were. Why, then, was not man born with a greater sense of responsibility? Because responsibility, like everything else, is appreciated only through gradual evolution; it is a result of the profound discovery of our relative dependence on each other, and the tremendous importance of our individual acts.

Since all virtues, all wisdom, health, and all noble attainments are possible only through relativity, evolution, and contrast, the fundamental issue is this: Why is man subject to these laws? Because he is limited in power and capability, and can only acquire bit by bit. If, finally, the sceptic asks, Why is man thus limited? the only answer is that

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he would otherwise be infinite. A being who should be able to apprehend all these things would be mentally omnipotent *at one time*. Granted finite individuality, you must have the limitations of time and of evolution. The more there is to be known and attained, the more must man be limited by the only known method of attainment; namely, through progressive relativity or evolution. Sweep away evolution, and you sweep away the condition *par excellence* which renders finite life possible.

There are those who thoughtlessly declare that man is perfect now, that there are no limitations, there is no progress, and thought is omnipotent. But, if one man were perfect, all men would be perfect, since perfection is social completion; and who would claim this for society? If man were without limitations, he would be absolute in all particulars. It stands to reason that there could be but one such being. If there be no progress, there is absolute attainment; in other words, perfect rest. But by hypothesis, and in actual fact, there is strife, evil, and pain, from which we all seek escape. If thought be omnipotent, it can create its own laws, regardless of the eternal laws of the ages. Thus all these theories prove their originators to be ignorant of the great fact of relativity, the value of the imperfect and the limited as organic parts of the social and cosmic whole.

The simple facts are that we are here in a world-order which justifies itself to each soul as rapidly, and only as rapidly, as the soul comes face to face

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with its own limitations. When man learns that action and reaction are equal, and that his own activity is the prime cause of all that he suffers or enjoys, he holds the key which unlocks the entire mystery of suffering and evil. The universe is evil only to him who does not understand its laws. Only that man commits evil who is still ignorant that the universe will catch him, even if he escapes the law of man. He only complains of the sufferings of humanity who has failed to grasp the great fact of social evolution, that human life is an organism. Finally, he still suffers pain who has not yet fully learned the great lesson of adjustment.

If with the existence of pain and evil, man is better off than if the world had been created " perfect," it follows that the so-called " perfect " is artificial. If evil be indispensable, it is a part of the evolutionary scheme, and does not by any means imply that there is an adversary rampant in the world. The " devil " is just our own relative imperfection, which is deemed diabolical only so long as the great fact is unknown that all the circumstances of human life are conditioned by man's own lower and higher nature.

The educational value of evil is dependent on the discovery of our true worth in life as moral and spiritual individuals. Half of the mystery is explained when we learn that without relative evil there could not be relative good, that our own ignorance is the prime cause of the " curse " that is upon us. The other half becomes clear with the discovery of " The New Point of View," when we

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learn the evolutionary origin of the tendencies in us which we call evil. On the other hand, the problem is half solved when we understand the meaning of pain, and how by attaining health and equanimity we may avoid it. The remaining half of the solution is found only in the solution of the social problem. For the problem of evil is inextricably blended with all the problems of social regeneration and reform. We have all evolved together, we all share in our animal inheritance, and we must together find freedom from this inheritance through the social cultivation of our higher nature. Thus the social problem becomes the problem *par excellence* which the educated man is called upon to solve. Upon this question he must bring to bear all his learning, all his wisdom, all the training which the struggle for self-expression has brought him. And thus shall his existence be most fully justified, for it is this necessity which above all others furnishes an opportunity for service, and thus in turn evil itself finds its fullest justification.

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CHAPTER XI

THE PHILOSOPHICAL IDEAL

"Philosophy is knowledge of things not as they appear but as they are caused."

THE first essential in all scientific and philosophical inquiry is to define the object of one's search, the second is to formulate a method by the faithful application of which one hopes to attain ultimate truth. In this chapter I shall try to outline both the ideal and the method of philosophy, and make a few suggestions which may prove helpful to the student.

In simple terms, philosophy is a rational interpretation of life. Its scope is as wide as the universe. Its ideal is the critical examination and unification of all knowledge: the truth contained in all history, science, religion, art, morality, and all speculations concerning the future. It underlies all education. It underlies all practical life. Consequently, nothing is excluded by it, no event is uninteresting, no aspiration without its meaning. It is as deeply concerned with all that is dear and true to you and me, as it is to understand the system of the stars, or surprise the secrets of nature. Its interests are

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literally unlimited, and always progressive. It is human, sympathetic, appealing; it aspires even to fellowship with God. It pays the highest price for virtue, yet is not ashamed to be seen with the sinner, and is as much at home among the lowly as in the proudest gatherings of society's idols.

Perhaps the easiest approach to the general point of view of philosophy is by the statement that a metaphysic, or theory of first principles, is involved in every word we utter, in every action, in every thought; for all our acts imply certain assumptions or beliefs in regard to the world. For example, philosophy supplies education with its experimental ideal. The statement that all life is educational involves an entire philosophical system. We have an illustration of a philosophical attitude in the foregoing chapter, where philosophy rationalises the existence of pain and evil. Thus every general statement about life involves the essential principle of a world-system. We proceed on the hypothesis that an external world exists, that it is real or that it is good. We believe that other beings besides ourselves exist, and we believe ourselves capable of effecting changes in the world; for experience has taught us to respect the universe as superior to our wills, yet in a measure responsive to them. All science is based upon such assumptions as these; that is, science begins by describing forces and substances, beings and things; it asserts that we have but to open our eyes in order to behold a world of living organisms, evolution, dissolution, order, law,

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system. Every art, every branch of human activity, must have its tools to work with, and the majority are content to take things as they are without tracing out these implications and assumptions to their ultimate foundation.

Philosophy begins where human thought in general rests content, and is primarily concerned with that which lies beyond, with the ultimate origin, nature, and destiny of the universe. It asks questions which seem absurd at first sight, but which prove to be the profoundest of all problems, namely, Are these postulates rightfully assumed? Is it true that an external world exists? Is there really a self or soul capable of exerting free will? Are there other selves? Is there in truth a God, a world-system, goodness, beauty? If so, what is the meaning of it all? How came it to be, and whither is it tending? In short, the philosopher questions and examines every fact, asking not only if it is a fact, if we really know it, but *how* we know it, and *why* we know it, and if it may be rationally doubted.

The great philosophers seem to possess an instinct for the perception of life's goodness and meaning, as though there were some door left open to them which is closed to other men. They seem to be in immediate touch with the essence of life, in divine communion, as though in their inmost hearts they knew life's entire secret. It is true, all fail in the statement of what they perceive. Although progress is constantly being made, there is not a philosophical system, from the earliest attempts in

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India to the Spencerian philosophy of evolution to-day, which satisfies the human mind; nor do all of these together, nor all the bibles of the world in addition, meet our full demand. Yet imperfect as their statements may be, one feels that many philosophers have really had the holy vision. Nature speaks to us in just such language as this, and it would be profane if one could translate it literally. The greatest philosopher is he who can quicken this instinct for the wholeness, the fulness of things, and at the same time be accurate in statement. Many may feel life's spirit, many can state bare facts, but it is only the few who are equally true both to feeling and thought, and their relations. The philosopher, therefore, in order to reduce all beliefs, assumptions, and visions to their ultimate theories of life, must of necessity be the fairest, the broadest, and most fundamental thinker. He cannot, like other people, belong to sects, organisations, and schools, so far as these place restrictions on a person, but must be impartial, impersonal, and free. He cannot, for example, be a mere socialist, a mere politician or historian. Yet no one must understand socialism, politics and history better than he. He must not rest content with the surfaces of things, but must ever ask, What is real, what is enduring, what does it mean ?

This, in a word, is the very essence of philosophy, namely, the belief that there is something besides appearances; that beneath, above, beyond all this that passes, above, behind, yet revealed in these

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things we see, these pains we suffer, and these joys that lift us to a higher plane, there is a Reality that abides, an Intelligence which directs, a Being which animates.

In one sense, all men are philosophers, for all have learned to avoid illusion; most of us believe there is a power behind phenomena, and we have all treasured up bits of philosophic wisdom gleaned from experience. Yet we find it difficult to give reasons for the faith that is in us. The philosopher gives his life to the search for reasons. And if a philosopher finally becomes an idealist, it is not because he wants to believe that ideas are more enduring than things, but because reason itself has convinced him of it.

Exact philosophy is thus more fundamental than the doctrines which usually pass current as creeds and theological systems. The old theology, for example, made certain assumptions concerning God as creator, outside of the world; his incarnation as "the only begotten son"; as composed of three persons in one; as demanding a propitiatory sacrifice; but it did not ask how these things could be. The history of thought shows that the moment men began seriously to ask, How? the power of these dogmas began to wane.

Again, popular optimism and pessimism are unconcerned with fundamental problems. In the one attitude, a man assumes that this is the best of possible worlds, in the other that it is the worst. But Sully points out, in his masterly refutation of the

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pessimism of Schopenhauer and Hartmann,[1] that as this is the only world known to us it is arrogance on our part to assume that this is the best or the worst of possible worlds. Sully refutes pessimism on its own grounds, finding it unscientific, irrational, and unproved. Furthermore, it is clear from discussions like his that some are pessimists by nature, while in other cases optimism of temperament finds expression in optimism of philosophy.

Others assume either that life is already explained by some doctrine to which they have become zealous converts, or that it is hopelessly mysterious. But here again assumption calls for fundamental inquiry. In a doubt that a philosophical system is possible, a theory of ultimate knowledge is already implied.[2] Man cannot therefore escape from being some sort of philosopher, if he thinks at all. If he does not think, a metaphysical theory is nevertheless confessed by his conduct, as we have already suggested.

It is clear, then, that no doctrine is worthy of being called a philosophy which fails to look beneath its own terms in search of ultimate reality. "It is the only science," says Kant, "which admits of completion," and he further defines it as "the science of the first principles of human cognition."[3] That is, it asks not only what we may know, but how we know it. "It is the totality of all known

[1] James Sully, *Pessimism*. Appleton, 1891.

[2] See Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, Introduction. Swann, Sonnenschein, & Co., London, 1893.

[3] *Critique of Pure Reason*.

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facts in the unity of an intelligible system," says F. E. Abbot. It is (1) *sceptical*, as defined by Bradley[1]: "I understand by it to become aware of and to doubt all preconceptions"; (2) *constructive*, as defined by James Martineau[2]: "Systems of philosophical opinion grow from the mind's instinctive effort to unify by sufficient reason, and justify by intelligible pleas, its deepest affections and admirations"; and (3) *ultimate*, as defined in a recent lecture by Professor Ladd of Yale: "There are three kinds of knowledge; that of the practical kind, which distinguishes men from fools, the knowledge of common sense; and there is scientific knowledge, although this cannot be divided in a hard and fast way, since the every-day knowledge of our time was once scientific knowledge. These two kinds, some people think, are the only kinds of knowledge, but the human kind is not and never has been satisfied with these two alone. Philosophy is older than science, and is more fundamental. The scientist himself must make this leap beyond science, *or he does not know what is real.* That he must make assumptions is proved by Huxley himself, who on one page was an uncritical realist, on the next an agnostic, and on another a Berkleyan idealist. There is a natural craving for a kind of certainty which goes beyond scientific certainty. Teachers of the physical sciences are not capable of satisfying this craving. Ask the astronomer who observes things in space

[1] *Appearance and Reality.*

[2] *Types of Ethical Theory.* Macmillan, & Co., 1891.

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and knows their laws what that space is, and he must come to philosophy."

A philosophical system, then, is a scheme in which the presuppositions of all the sciences, such, for example, as the existence of nature, of forces, of selves, of the moral law, are reduced to intelligible unity in accordance with some rational principle. It seeks to eliminate all prejudice, narrowly temperamental bias, and the limitations of time and place. It is never reared in intellectual isolation, and must certainly fail unless it take cognisance of all previous systems of any importance.[1] The aim of philosophy is indeed the most audacious and comprehensive ever conceived by man, namely, to discover and state in precise language not only the truth about the universe and all it contains — interpreted in the light of our growing knowledge — but to put all this in its true light in relation to the history of thought.

Thus broadly defined, the problems of philosophy may be summarised in the words of Kant[2]: "What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope for?" F. Perron sums them up in nine questions: "We must ask respecting things: If they are? What they are? How they are? By what? Why? Where? When? How many? In what relations? And these nine questions lead to nine

[1] Consult Royce, *The Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, Lecture I.; Windleband, *History of Philosophy*. For further definitions, see the histories of philosophy by Ueberweg, i., Introduction, § 1; Erdmann, i., Introduction; Zeller, *History of Greek Philosophy*, i., 1.

[2] *Critique of Pure Reason.*

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categories, respectively: Existence, Essence, Mode, Causality, End, Space, Time, Number, Relation."

In a more definite way we may state the great problems as follows:

What is matter? Are atoms (if they exist) ultimate?

What is mind or consciousness?

How are matter and mind related?

What is force—ultimately? (Mechanism.)

What is life—ultimately? (Organism.)

What is causation—ultimately? (God.)

What are time and space?

Do we possess any knowledge beyond experience?

How is finite experience possible? How is knowledge of any sort possible? How did it begin?—that is, What constitutes a finite being? (Paradox of the infinite and finite.)

Why does the universe exist, and how?

What is the basis of moral obligation?

Does man possess freedom of will?

Is man an immortal soul, possessing ultimately separate individuality?

What is evil?

What is the ultimate good?

What is the relation of ethical individuals (pluralism) to the one Reality? (as defined by monism.[1])

Of course the mere statement of these questions involves certain uncritical assumptions. But all these problems have engaged philosophical inquiry,

[1] See *The Will to Believe*, by Professor James. Longmans, Green, & Co., 1897.

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and they suggest the scope of metaphysical thought. Strictly speaking, the only satisfactory statement of the problems is the account of their evolution from the speculations of Thales to the latest researches of the followers of Hegel and the doctrine of evolution.[1]

In the examination and statement of the great questions, the ideal of course is the development of a "philosophy without assumptions." Such a system might not at once appeal to the uneducated, for it would be the result of the most painstaking thought. But it should win the immediate assent of reason since, like the proposition, two and two are four, it would contain its own verification. That is, one would not need to look beyond the statements presented for their justification. It would be truly ultimate description such that every man, in his right mind, by taking four units would find their sum to be four. In other words, life critically and appreciatively observed would be found like the description of it.

That which would qualify anyone to accept such a statement as, two and two are four, would of course be a certain amount of experience in regard to other combinations of figures, and the conviction

[1] The reader is more likely to be interested at first in a statement of the modern problems as propounded by Royce (*The Spirit of Modern Philosophy*), Falckenberg (*History of Modern Philosophy*), Paulsen (*Introduction to Philosophy*), than in the larger histories by Erdmann and Ueberweg, or a severely technical treatise like the *Critique of Pure Reason* or *Appearance and Reality*.

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that reason is capable of discerning the meaning of experience and arriving at truth. If one is not yet convinced that the mind can reason correctly, it is futile to set forth even the most accurately logical deductions. When Xenophanes, for example, declares that the Best can only be One, he who is in possession of reason and the belief in its validity sees at once that this statement is universally and eternally true; otherwise language could have no definite meaning. It is the essence of the philosophical method to give unqualified assent to a proposition only when all propositions opposed to it are seen to be false. And a time comes in mental development when certain statements at once appeal to the mind as axiomatic. For example, the statement that a straight line is the shortest between two points.

The path of the philosopher is necessarily beset by every possible obstacle with which a human soul can contend yet achieve ultimate success. He must know error in all its forms, that he may by contrast know truth. He must have adequate knowledge of all classes of facts, so that severally and through their relations they shall be completely intelligible. Philosophy may therefore be defined as an adequate account of the nature of things in the light of their laws and their total relations, both the Being and the Becoming, the Real and the Apparent.

The philosopher is never in haste to arrive at decisions. He lives in eternity, not in time, and is

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willing to set apart many years for the solution of a single problem. His own eagerness would defeat his object if he permitted himself to hurry. When he is on the verge of a positive result, he must immediately call a halt by asking, Is there an alternative? Is there not some other way of regarding this question? Have I developed all the logical implications of my premises? Is my fundamental premise sound? Has a different point of view been maintained in the past?

The philosopher's method must therefore be its own corrective. Each advance should be accompanied by a corresponding development of scepticism. The latest conclusion must be as closely scrutinised as the first. "Exposition is often imposition." One is likely to become unduly interested in endlessly subtle complexities, to maintain a certain point of view for mere argument's sake, or because it furnishes material for an essay. There is also danger that one may create unreal difficulties, or dwell at length on a mere lifeless abstraction, such as the "Unknowable," the "*Ding-an-Sich.*" It is also easy to fall into anthropomorphism, to forget that, although the chief value of a system of philosophy is often the natural history of the intellect that develops and expounds it, the intellect may stand in its own light.

The world is slow to recognise the value of this philosophical sincerity and painstaking criticism. Usually it is misunderstood and condemned as negative or iconoclastic. As a rule, people care

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more for those teachers who appeal to their credulity than for those who inspire thought. People like to believe, to gather about those who deal in ready-made convictions. Consequently, the truth-seeker is condemned because he does not speak out convincingly. He is charged with "threshing his oats in public," when, as matter of fact, he has already thought too deeply to ally himself with any particular theory. But Socrates was the wisest of Greeks because he knew and said that he knew nothing.

It is the superficial teacher who deals only in convictions, never in doubts; who tells what God is and all about life and the soul. He who has truly begun to philosophise knows that all our knowledge is hypothetical. We are proceeding on certain highly probable assumptions, and taking the rest on faith, in the belief that the universe will not prove disappointing.

The little child can ask questions which the wisest of us cannot answer. We may hazard an answer. But it is usually a mere x, a skilful formula to conceal ignorance. In reality, all our knowledge, even our philosophy, is still relative: we know only so far as individual reason has penetrated. Beyond our present life and thought, in other conditions or on other planets, what do we know? Even the idea of God, varying from age to age, is man's attempt to describe a reality corresponding to his highest emotion and thought. While man believes his thought of God to be an infallible revelation, he deceives himself and deceives others. When he

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learns that it is not God, but a statement of his consciousness in search of God, he then frankly confesses his ignorance, and the growth of real wisdom begins.

Since all revelation, all experience, necessarily partakes of the limitations of the recipient, it should be put forth only for what it is worth. All generalisations concerning experience should be understood as describing that experience in so far as we now see it. Consequently, the wise man says: So far as I have observed, this is the way it seems, this appears highly probable. I will therefore adopt this hypothesis tentatively, but hold myself open to an entire change of view. Thus the experimental attitude must be paramount until philosophy has discovered the last datum.

There are numberless illusions which hold sway for a time. If, for example, I am suffering from disease, and experiment with various drugs, all of which fail until suddenly I regain my health, my conclusion naturally is that the drug healed me. But it may be a mere coincidence that I take just this drug simultaneously with nature's restoration of my body. Or it may appear that a hypnotist, a faith healer, or a mental healer has cured me. Yet all this may be illusory, for my own faith or autosuggestion may have been the real agent. Perhaps some spirit healed me. Perhaps my excess had run itself out. Who knows positively ?

Even if I could absolutely know in a given case, it would not follow that all cases are to be described

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by the same theory. Fresh investigation must accompany every new experience. The number of possibilities is enormously large. We may think we possess the truth, when there are a thousand aspects of the case which we have never considered.

The history of thought shows that doubt has played as important a part in the development of exact philosophy as belief itself. Indeed, thoroughgoing philosophy began when men began to doubt. The majority are credulous: it is doubt which guards the main pathway to truth. What is most needed, especially in the pulpit, is frankness, a sincere confession of opinion. Instead, we have hundreds of ministers who are preaching one set of ideas and believing another. Why not come out and confess that one no longer believes the old theology, that philosophical doubts are too strong? Surely there is rich compensation in the adoption of the experimental point of view, and the discovery of the deep significance of natural evolution.

But, if you expose your doubts in public, you may create doubters. What of that? Doubt implies that one is dissatisfied and is in search of a larger philosophy. Progress begins when men begin to doubt conventional standards and to launch out for themselves. Pushed far enough, doubt leads to deeper and broader conviction. The great men of science are those who, like Darwin, were not convinced until they were compelled by an enormous accumulation of evidence. The science of evolution has advanced year by year, since the publication of

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The Origin of Species in 1859, because the students of evolution have dared and are daring to propose questions which Darwin's theory did not fully answer.

With all these considerations in mind, we may now define the philosophical method analytically and didactically as follows:

Seek first facts, reasons, causes. Hypotheses are only needed temporarily to eke out facts, or as first steps in the scientific method.

Do not assume premises: give evidence for every statement.

Think accurately, moderately, exhaustively.

Follow reason rather than preconception, wherever it leads.

Use no word whose meaning is not perfectly clear to the average philosophical reader.

Define accurately when necessary.

Ignore no facts. Be open-minded, on the alert for new evidence.

Use language which cannot be mistaken.

Make no statement for which you could not, if questioned, give an adequate reason; none on authority.

"Give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted."

Be content only with the most rational, the best provisional, the most accurate statements which our limited knowledge permits us to make.

Do not be eager to explain facts according to

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some preconceived theory, but willingly sacrifice the theory.

Avoid the confusion of your point of view with the fact which you wish to interpret.

" Unless you refute your opponent at his best you are refuted by him."

Understand clearly that the materialist, the idealist, the theologian, and the man of science *mean* one and the same Substance, the Spirit, the Life of all, whether they term it matter, " Infinite Self," " God," or " force," and you will no longer be intolerantly troubled by the divergence of their opinions, but seek the truth in all.

Professor Lovering once said that the reason why people no longer believe the corpuscular theory is because those who held it have died off. A suggestive remark.

Suppose a man living in the tenth century were to say to another, " I *know* the earth is the centre of the universe." He might feel perfectly sure he was right, for the reason that he was not yet open to a wider view. Many love hypothesis rather than truth, because truth is so far beyond them. If the intuition of one age becomes the reason of the next, and the superstition of the third, then either it was not genuine intuition, or it was only a partial statement of truth. It follows that either our intuitions are not intuitions at all, and we are not able to distinguish between inclination, theory, reason, and insight, or they are glimpses of truth through the thick veil of ignorance.

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It is the special privilege of the childhood of the world to rejoice, to build air castles, to have great hopes, to have firm convictions. But it is the task of intellectual manhood to analyse these very hopes, and even to doubt them. We are inclined to hold fast to our childish dreams. The religious world has scarcely passed through this stage. Yet the philosopher tells us that we do not *know* until we have tested our visions.

Yet there is a sense in which we should cling to our deepest hopes: until we prove them to be false. But we must make sure of three points: (1) that we love truth more than any statement of it; (2) that we are open to growth through experience, reason, and intuition; (3) that we are not holding something to be true for which we have no evidence.

Above all, then, be concrete ; cling fast to practical evidence. Remember that art comes first, in the natural order of things, then science. Therefore, seek first life, experience ; then the meaning of your experience. Live deeply, then think philosophically.

The philosophical temper or attitude of mind has seldom been better suggested, at least so far as its superiority to circumstance is concerned, than in these words from *Amiel's Journal*[1]:

" There is but one thing needful—to possess God. All our senses, all our powers of mind and soul, all our external resources, are so many ways of approaching the divinity, so many ways of tasting and

[1] Translated by Mrs. Humphry Ward. Macmillan, 1893.

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of adoring God. We must learn to detach ourselves from all that is capable of being lost, to bind ourselves absolutely only to what is absolute and eternal, and to enjoy the rest as a loan, a usufruct. . . . Let come what will — even death. Only be at peace with self, live in the presence of God, in communion with him, and leave the guidance of existence to those universal powers against whom thou canst do nothing! If death gives me time so much the better. If its summons is near, so much the better still; if a half-death overtake me, still so much the better, for so the path of success is closed to me only that I may find opening before me the path of heroism, of moral greatness and resignation. Every life has its potentiality of greatness, and as it is impossible to be outside God, the best is consciously to dwell in him."

In fine, then, the philosophical attitude is notable for two striking characteristics. The philosopher is free, unattached, ready to move from place to place wherever truth may lead and without regard to predilections, personal desires and doctrines; and he is a critic. No one must be as free, yet no one must be so persistently, fundamentally critical. He must be the sceptic of sceptics, discovering the errors, illusions, and subtleties which escape all other men. It is not for him to rest in settled convictions, nor in the belief that existence is an enigma. He must be continually investigating until he at least finds out what may be known and what cannot be known. He must move forward with evolution, yet see to it

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that the wisdom of the past is not neglected. He must therefore live with the ages; at the same time no one should understand the present more thoroughly than he. His is the privilege to be universal while all other men are specialists. Thus his ideal is the acme of all intellectual and spiritual education, and training in philosophy is the best discipline which the entire educational world affords. The broader his life, the profounder his intellect, the richer his spiritual experience, the more is he capable of realising his high ideal. Although deprived of many opportunities for service, none must have so great a heart, none must more truly lead the life of the Spirit ; and there is rich compensation in the fact that he may inspire thousands of workers, that the work of the thinker is the most fundamental, in a sense the most original work in a generation. He who is accounted worthy of this ideal is in fact most fortunate of men. Fortunate, too, that man who has at least dedicated his life to it, who aspires to that divine communion which makes possible the interpretation of God to man.

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CHAPTER XII

THE CRITERIA OF TRUTH

One has little confidence in the truth of his own view who is not willing for a moment to entertain a different one.—W. M. SALTER.

THE goal of philosophical inquiry having been defined as ultimate, reasoned truth about the total universe, adequate interpretation of life, such that the severest facts, for example, the darkest problems of social evil, shall be intelligibly explained, the next step is the adoption of a criterion which shall show that truth is truth when we find it, despite the possibilities of error.

When, however, we ask, What shall be the criterion? we at once meet a serious difficulty. No test of truth has been agreed upon even by the few profoundest philosophers. The inconceivability of the opposite has been proposed by some. But a philosopher might some time conceive of the opposite. A thorough-going scientific man has been known to reject what was proved fact to thousands, because his particular and limited theory of the universe did not permit him even to conceive of its possibility. We have noted all along in this volume that life is an experiment, subject to the unexpected

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appearance of entirely new combinations of events, both mental and physical.

Self-consistency is another accepted test.[1] Yet although Reality must surely be self-consistent, also the system which adequately describes it, no thinker has yet been able to rise to the plane of this far-reaching consistency and avoid in his statements the obviously inconsistent. Systems which do justice to the self-consistency of the whole, as such, fail to do equal justice to the parts. On the other hand, pluralistic systems fall equally short of attaining satisfactory unity. Every philosopher believes that the total whole is somehow one, but the problem of the one and the many — the ultimate relation of free, finite, ethical individuals to the Supreme Spirit — is still unsolved. The spiritual vision perceives this diversity in unity as an organically perfect whole, but the intellect is not yet able to rationalise all that the spirit sees.

Objective evidence has been proposed. But that meets the demands of the realist only, and realism has been again and again refuted.[2] Subjective evidence is the criterion of some, but obviously both objective and subjective demands must be met. It is hard to refute some forms of subjectivism. But no philosophic task is easier than to riddle the claims of mysticism. On the face of it, the mystic's subjective claim is illogical and finite ; he mistakes his own spiritual emotion for the great whole ; he

[1] See Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, p. 136.

[2] See Royce, *The World and the Individual*, Lecture III. Macmillan, & Co., 1900.

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overlooks ethical distinctions and the ultimate significance of individuality.

In India, philosophy has always been inseparable from religion, and has lacked that "critical consideration of reason by itself," which, as Windleband tells us, is the very essence of philosophy as defined by Kant. It has always delighted in just those explanations (which, like *maya*, do not explain) which the Western thinker seeks to eliminate. While, therefore, Oriental contemplation has a lesson to teach, it is sure never to satisfy the demands of Occidental reason.

Agnosticism is only a halting-place in philosophy: it satisfies neither the head nor the heart. No lover of philosophic wisdom is likely to rest content with the mere, unresolved data of the special sciences. And theology has long ago forfeited its right to furnish a criterion.[1]

"The unanimous consensus of the competent" has been strongly urged as the necessary criterion,[2] and doubtless this is the criterion of the special sciences. It is very generally recognised that an observer must not rest content with his own experiments and conclusions alone, but submit them to comparative tests. But when it comes to philosophy, Who is to decide upon the competent? That which is undesirable in a special science, namely, individual

[1] For an able discussion of other criteria, see Professor James, *The Will to Believe*, pp. 63–110.

[2] F. E. Abbot, *Scientific Theism*, 1888; *The Way Out of Agnosticism*, 1890. Little, Brown, & Co., Boston.

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bias, is oftentimes the very life of philosophy. It is the philosopher's duty to develop his temperamental insight to the full. Philosophers still differ so radically that there are no competent. If there were such a body, it would need a critic of its methods and results, who would himself stand in need of a moderator. And so to the end of time a larger criterion would be needed than the mere consensus of the competent.

At the same time it is worth while to follow this method as far as possible, as thus succinctly stated by Dr. Abbot, in his address before the World's Parliament of Religions:

"(1) Individual observation of facts; (2) individual hypothesis to explain them; (3) individual verification of this hypothesis by fresh observation; (4) universal observation through publication of the individual's results; (5) universal hypothesis through modification of these results by criticism; (6) universal verification of the modified hypothesis attested by the consensus of the competent."

Recently, a sect has appeared in America which assumes that the metaphysical point of view is synonymous with its practical doctrine,—the philosophy of mental healing. And so the term "new metaphysics" has come colloquially to mean simply a system of therapeutics and practical idealism. This is obviously an inaccurate use of terms. All practical idealism is of course included in the metaphysical world, but all the data of the wide universe are also included. To select a specific application

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and call that " the metaphysical point of view " is like choosing the French language and calling that the linguistic point of view. Other members of the Indo-European group have a right to be heard, the Semitic branch of the Aryan family, the agglutinated and monosyllabic tongues, etc.

What the problems of metaphysics or philosophy are, we have already noted in the foregoing chapter. It is clear from these that this science of sciences is primarily theoretical; it deals with the universe as a whole as compared with any specific science which, like geology, is confined to one branch of knowledge simply. A mere geologist or a mere mental healer is not a philosopher, for a philosopher is wholly non-partisan. Philosophy is knowledge of the universe for its own sake. Strictly speaking, it has always been abstract, metaphysical. With Hegel, for example, it was the science of the absolute considered in the light of its logical evolution. However far its practical application may be carried, there will always be a demand for a science which goes yet farther and impartially considers the abstract result.

The disciple of the " new metaphysics," for example, looks only for the good. It is his occupation to emphasise the positive, or optimistic side in order to persuade the mind to discard its false beliefs. And this is no doubt a practical necessity. But for the thorough-going philosopher the truth in pessimism must be as gladly welcomed as the truth in optimism. He cannot, as metaphysician, ignore facts because by so doing he may heal somebody.

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He must read the story of life as it is, omitting no chapter. When the time comes to live his philosophy, his practical idealism will be untrue unless it can affirm its ideals despite the darkest facts, thus winning the supreme triumph of philosophic insight. This is, of course, the ideal which the " new metaphysics " is seeking to realise.

Yet having now insisted on the demands of pure metaphysics as truth for its own sake, regardless of its practical value, it is time to recognise the suggestive fact that the practical motive has always been a starting-point for the philosophical good. F. C. S. Schiller is the most strenuous chronicler of this fact in his very valuable *Riddles of the Sphinx*.[1] Windleband points out that philosophy was known even in Greek times as " the practical meaning of an art of life, based upon scientific principles," the striving after virtue, and the rational pursuit of happiness (Epicurus). The philosophical motive has, in fact, widely varied, being sometimes naturalistic, sometimes sceptical, again pertaining wholly to the inner life or to logical deduction. It still remains true, however, that a philosopher is not genuinely such unless he is willing to pass beyond these inceptive motives to the universal ideal of metaphysical truth for its own sake. One who, like Lewes,[2] writes two volumes to prove that philosophy is impossible is no philosopher.

[1] Swann, Sonnenschein, & Co., 1891.

[2] *Biographical History of Philosophy*, revised edition. Appleton, 1888.

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It needs no further argument, then, to show that philosophy takes us into the wide world of the universal. Philosophical truth must fulfil all rational criteria, all demands which may be made upon it. It must not only explain life, or show conclusively why life cannot be explained, it must not only be consistent and meet both the demands of our inner nature and the rationalised data of physical sense, but be capable of practical application and have something to say concerning the future and the conception of immortality. As embracing not merely epistemology, cosmology, and psychology, but ethics and the bases of religion,[1] it must be a practical clue to the meaning of life for every individual. It ought to appeal both to the head and to the heart, telling me not only what is true, but what is beautiful and good.

Such is the ideal, and as high as it may be, it is evident that philosophical truth will never be found unless the demand for it be conscientiously rigorous. From this point of view, the objection to religious creeds and theories founded on insight alone, is the claim they make to have solved the riddle of the universe. If you raise intellectual objections they will either assure you that these things cannot be understood by the reason, and therefore the intellect is forever inferior, or they will dismiss the whole problem by some dogmatic reply. Their

[1] It is clear from the arguments of Professor Royce in *The World and the Individual* that theology must henceforth rest on a metaphysical conception of Reality.

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advocates are not content to throw light on the points which their specialty illumines, frankly saying, " Beyond this we do not know." They offer ignorance-concealing formulas which assume to be universal solvents, as if a poor answer were better than sincerity. The genuine philosopher would say, " The future history of philosophy is the only authority capable of answering that question."

If we have only hopes to offer, let us therefore frankly confess it, and not pretend to know, for philosophy brooks no dogmatism. If, as Huxley once admitted, our most assured scientific results are only hypotheses of a highly probable character, then publish this fact universally. If the world owns possibilities, chances, do not talk knowingly about fate. Let your " x " be known as such, and if you are an agnostic do not parade as a gnostic.

In philosophy, any man's thought is instructive who will sincerely and logically maintain a point of view, even if it be subversive of ethics, for example, the precept, " all is good." Such a point of view is instructive because it brings into bold relief the ethical criteria of right and wrong, because it is untrue to the facts of organic evolution. Yet the moment the advocate of such a doctrine begins to dogmatise, to assume some occult point of view from which all is said to be absolutely good, philosophical discussion necessarily ceases.[1]

[1] For really philosophical theories of ethics, consult such works as Martineau, *Types of Ethical Theory* (Macmillan, 1891); Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1890).

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The failure of many metaphysicians to make a successful application of their speculations about life is doubtless due to this dogmatic clinging to an absolute point of view — in face of the fact that all our knowledge is concrete and relative. It is customary with theorists of this class to start with an artificially devised premise concerning absolute perfection, then, declaring that naught else exists, turn to the world of struggle and sorrow, and term it a "shadow," or the "absence of light." Consequently, it is a logical procedure to develop a system of abstract affirmations in order to disabuse the mind of its illusions, to declare that they are "errors" having no power.

The concrete philosopher begins with this present evolving world as he finds it, then asks what sort of Reality must exist in order to give rise to just this struggling mass of beings and things. The better he knows the world, the more knowledge he has of its laws, its evolution, and its ideals, the greater will be his knowledge of its logical cause. Only as he proceeds directly from the facts of the world back to the Cause immediately behind or within them can he hope to develop a sound theory of Reality. He knows nothing about Reality as an undifferentiated mass, a shoreless ocean of undisturbed peace. For him the cause of things is active in precisely these present conflicts through which humanity is being perfected. He knows Spirit only as accomplishing somewhat, as welling into manifestation through the rock, the unicellular organism, the

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vegetable and animal kingdoms, civilisation, intellect, morality, art, education, religion, service, the Christ. Of Spirit unmanifested, at rest, or apart from force, feeling, thought, he has no conception and needs none. Spirit for him is simply the life of all that lives, the power active in all force, physical, mental, moral, and spiritual.

Of perfection he therefore knows only what the present life reveals, both as actually accomplished and as prophetically revealed in human consciousness. He describes Spirit as occupied in working out high ideals of harmony or beauty through all the ills we suffer, the errors we think, and the triumphs we win. He reasons that Spirit must know and be actively present in all this, since otherwise there would be no divine consciousness at all, nothing to do, *no reason to exist.*

When in search of a practical remedy, he therefore turns, not to an imaginary realm of superconscious abstraction to seek divine oneness in a vague, general way. Knowing that the Father is active in his aches and pains, he seeks to remove the obstacle in mind and body, that harmony may be attained. He seeks co-operative adjustment with the divine activity in the disturbed region. He thinks back of that to its cause, turning his consciousness from the painful sensation to the ideal which the Father is realising there, the ideal of health or harmony. Thus his thinking is concrete from start to finish. Thus does he justify more and more the practical criterion as one of the necessary tests of truth.

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Ordinarily, however, one seldom meets those who so faithfully combine two of our accepted criteria—consistency and practicality. The majority with whom one discusses these matters seem to allege as excuse "We will not count this time: this is the exception that proves the rule." The same inconsistency is found among nations. In times of peace, disarmament and other fine ideals are discussed, but in war time martial law permits what would on other occasions be deemed a crime. Christianity inculcates non-resistance, but this rule is only occasionally applied.

Let us, however, examine for a moment the credentials of consistency. One might generalise thus: Every statement must be immediately qualified by its exceptions. But if this generalisation be true, this statement has no exceptions. Once more, therefore, it is the exception which proves the rule.

Of what value, then, is a rule if it have exceptions? It is of value in so far as we know the exceptions. The rule applies to one set of conditions only. The exceptions hold only under changed conditions.

To illustrate, take the rule, "Resist not evil." It is argued that the principle is valueless unless it be absolute. But consider how much depends on the definition of evil, and the theory concerning its origin and meaning. Evidently, the rule is to apply only under certain conditions, and we must first understand the conditions before we can apply the rule

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There may be times when it is wisest to let the thief take the cloak also. But is it wise to let the evils of society pass and make no effort to overcome them? "Overcome evil with good," the rule goes on to say. In other words, it is a question of what motive to obey. There is a right and a wrong way of resisting evil. We must discriminate between our impulses, now obeying, now inhibiting. We are not called upon impassively to accept all that comes, complacently declaring that "Whatever is, is right." We must always resist something. It is only a question of what.

And so our moral consistency is dependent upon knowledge of the conditions under which now this motive is to rule and now that. Generally speaking, it may be wrong to tell a lie. But conditions are conceivable under which it might be justifiable to tell a lie to save a life. For instance, in order to rescue an innocent person from a would-be murderer. In this case moral consistency lies in fidelity to the greater good. It would be immoral to tell the truth, alleging as excuse that truth-telling is an absolute rule. It would be perfectly moral to tell a lie.

Nature offers precisely such illustrations of seeming inconsistency amidst consistency. The apple obeys gravity and falls, provided only that someone does not tie it on or pick it from the tree. Ice melts, but only under certain conditions of temperature. Action and reaction are equal, but an unforeseen factor may enter in to mar a planned

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result. The law is as true as ever. The modified result springing from an intervening cause is an additional proof of it.

Cautious philosophical consistency therefore says: "This is truth for me to-day, but I may have more light to-morrow, in which case I shall doubtless be compelled to modify my views; for I value truth more than a fixed creed, or consistency purchased at the expense of progress. If it be a choice between consistency of statement and fidelity to truth, I choose the latter form of consistency."

Obey your rule where it applies, follow your logic as far as it specifically leads, but remember that all specific logic, every rule, is relative. When you reach a limit ask, What is next? What is needed to supply the deficiencies? If you find that a rule which, like "all is good," sets out to be moral and logically winks at immorality, is inadequate, seek the rule which modifies and supplements it. If you discover that a theory, like pantheism, logically and universally carried out denies existence to one half of life, seek the truth in it by comparison with other demands of reason and the heart, supply the missing half. If you find this chapter dry and technical, remember the more spiritual portions of our discussion, and so supplement intellect by the Spirit.

In the end, our philosophy must be broad enough to include and harmonise all inadequacies, seeming inconsistencies, and paradoxes. If they cannot as yet be united as one whole, they should be held in experimental solution. Empiricism, even the

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radical empiricism of Professor James,[1] is always preferable to dogmatic or artificial monism, the assumption that "all is one" without rational evidence for this basic statement.

The philosopher delights in the construction of a theoretically perfect system of metaphysics—which convinces only himself. But as surely as metaphysics originated in the two-fold motive of truth for its own sake and truth for the sake of utility, so surely must the practical tendency be the critic of the speculative. The chief point of this chapter is that no wholly sound, merely speculative system of philosophy is possible. All speculative metaphysics must be supplemented by the higher spiritual insights and spontaneous experiences of the soul.

It has been argued again and again that reason is the only test of truth. But one may prove anything by argument and make it reasonable. Your logic may prove an event impossible: the next moment you may experience that which was declared impossible. I once heard the president of a university "prove" that thought transference could not possibly occur!

Common sense long ago adopted experience as a test of truth. In deepest truth, we know a principle to be sound only when we have applied it in actual life. Out of the concrete, all the data of reason have come; to the concrete, reason must again and again be applied to see if it adequately describes. Experience contradicts, verifies, or modifies and

[1] *The Will to Believe.*

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enlarges reason; reason must interpret and test experience.

It has been assumed that intuition infallibly, or by some occult law of inspiration or revelation, tells us what is truth. But we have already noted that no revelation is so pure that it is not defiled by the relativity and state of development of the medium through which it comes. What is to eliminate these defilements but further experience tested by reason? What alleged revelation has ever been accepted as entirely true, or consistent, even by "the consensus of the competent"? The theologians of one school may deem themselves competent. But what of the thousand other sects whose leaders can also quote scripture?

A revelation is true only for the man who proves it in his own life, and then only true for him. No other can see it precisely as he does, because no other man has had precisely his experience. In this profound fact we have found the chief reason why the elective system should prevail in education, why every man should make it his supreme purpose in life individually to discover and manifest the Spirit.

If you ask a person whose life is ruled by intuition for an experimental test, somehow the faculty fails to act just then: it functions spontaneously. Again and again we hear such people say that probably they were mistaken this time, or that self crept in and marred the result. Somehow the revelations of different seers do not harmonise. Obviously, there is no faculty in the human being whether

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intuition, reason, or conscience, which, upon command, always and unmistakably tells us what is right or true. In the last analysis, we must reserve a place for that transcendent spiritual experience which no power of self-consciousness can control, and to which no writer has ever done justice.

The co-operation of all our faculties guided, tested, and enlarged by many-sided, progressive experience can alone answer Pilate's question, "What is truth?" Even then it is open to the sceptic of sceptics to doubt whether our empirical constitution really corresponds to the reality of things. Such a one may at last say only "I believe it does," or "This is probably the truth."

It is philosophically justifiable to disbelieve as long as one can. "All will to believe is reason to doubt . . . all desire to doubt is reason to believe," says Récéjac in his admirable essay on mystic symbolism.[1] Sometimes it seems as if we must for ever continue in search of truth, but never find it. "Ever not quite." Ever hypothesis, experiment, result; fresh observation, modified hypothesis, fresh experiment, new result, pointing to further modification *ad infinitum*. Such is at once the fate and the delight of the philosophical game.

We expect to understand experience. But we know only through contrast, and at present we cannot transcend experience to find somewhat with which to contrast it, although psychical research is

[1] *Bases of Mystic Knowledge*, translated by S. C. Upton. Scribners, 1899.

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fast learning the secrets of peering — not into immortality—but the next realm of spiritual existence.

We ask to know what nature is, in itself, but how is this possible when we know it only as it affects our consciousness? In the future state we shall probably know it in a manner sufficiently unlike our present mode of sense perception to afford instructive contrasts. But we shall still know it through the media of finite consciousness.

We seek the meaning of all facts, but it is difficult to settle upon a fact; for evidence that might suit one class of observers would very likely fail to convince another class. If all that exists is interrelated, universal knowledge is required to interpret one atom, or one idea, as Tennyson has poetically suggested in his "Flower in the crannied wall."

Again, one of our criteria demands that objections shall be raised as long as rationally possible, but how many are really competent to raise objections to a system of metaphysics? Surely, those only who have reflected their temperaments to ultimate self-knowledge. But this is a progressive task, and the varieties of temperaments may not yet be exhausted. Who is great enough to transcend and unify all temperaments? God, do you say? But it is man who demands to know all truth. Even the belief in absolute divine truth is an altar to an unknown god, for each individual owns a distinctive point of view which, as such, must always be his own possession.[1]

[1] I have argued this in *Voices of Freedom*, chapter vi.

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Some philosophers aim to be rigidly scientific. But where are the higher sentiments which leap beyond exact thought? Is not the higher a part of life, and must we not live it in order to know it?

Have we disproved the possibility of philosophy by this long enumeration of difficulties? Not at all. The difficulties are not as great as they appear at first sight. No result is valueless to philosophy, even the attempt to be an absolute sceptic. The philosopher learns as much from failure as from success, and acute analysis of the limitations of human knowledge throws as much positive light on our present problem as it does upon the mystery of pain and evil.

Some students of philosophy expect to prove too much. The young enthusiast thinks he can prove the existence of God. How is this possible if God is the basis of existence itself, and therefore involved in the very premise with which our logic begins? The utmost the mind can do is to give reasons for believing in God, after his existence has been stated or discovered. In other words, his existence is one of those necessary presuppositions which philosophy can only justify and render intelligible; just as at the outset of this volume we discovered that we must start with the universe as a gift of experience, an "enigma," if you will, but at the same time an intelligible system whose laws and evolution man can understand.

We are unable to prove our existence, for we already exist when we start to prove it. We cannot show how the universe came to be, since we are

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unable to transcend the fact of its present existence as a complex mass of forces whose energy is perpetually conserved. "How there comes to be existence as all," says Professor Seth,[1] and how existence in its basal characteristics comes to be what it is—these are questions which, so far as one can see, omniscience itself would not enable us to answer." We cannot, then, as Hume has shown, know true causality. So far as we can see, Being with its universe—some universe—is eternal. Experience is probably the result of an existence which could be experienced were we able to transcend finite life and become infinite; for "that without which experience is impossible, cannot be the result of experience, though it must never be applied beyond the limits of possible experience."[2]

Yet again, what we fully are, as souls, we do not know, because we are unable to transcend ourselves as parts (which we clearly are) and grasp ourselves from the point of view of that which includes us. Nor can we look beyond our moral natures to ascertain how far, or to prove that we are really free. We must start with the fact that we are morally free, since otherwise life would have no meaning, and ethics would be impossible.[3] Our great resource is always to ask what life is now, what is the wisdom of the situation, and what life may become through the righteous conduct of men.

[1] *Man's Place in the Cosmos*, p. 163.
[2] Max Müller's *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, xlvi.
[3] *Voices of Freedom*, chapters iii. and iv.

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Thus the horizon clears when we understand the nature of our problem. While we look at the problem only in a negative way, complaining that we cannot logically prove the existence of God, nor explain how the first beginning (there was no such beginning) began, the philosophical prospect seems exceedingly dubious. But when we learn that there is somewhat which transcends proof, we are in a position to develop an all-round system. Then, for the first time, the spontaneous revelations within the individual soul begin to assume due importance.

We should, therefore, always remember to distinguish between ideas which (1) must be taken as gifts of experience, such as Reality, freedom, the soul, immortality, experience; and (2) ideas susceptible of logical and experiential proof. A closed system of philosophy in which every proposition shall be proved is obviously impossible. But a system in which every idea shall be made rationally intelligible is, however, within the limits not only of the possible but of the probable.

While, then, we ought always to continue our investigations and rigorously apply the tests of truth, doing our utmost both to avoid error and to keep open minds, we should at the same time remember these necessary limitations. As we shall see in the next chapter, it is our limitations which enable us to do our work as organic parts of the universe. These limitations once understood, we find ourselves in a position to begin in earnest the great work of realising the philosophical ideal. What at one time

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seemed to be an insuperable difficulty proves to be of positive value when seen in its true light.

Taking a glance over the whole field, we may sum up the criteria of truth as follows: Philosophic truth in its ultimate sense is self-consistent, but this self-consistency often lies far below the surface which it apparently contradicts. It meets the reasonable, mutually supplementary demands of realism and idealism, the head and the heart, intellect and intuition, and is at once valuable for its own sake and because of its utility. Reason is its most useful criterion, yet experience is its most important corrective. It must never overlook the most distinctive revelations of individuality, yet must be equally faithful to the universal. It is an organic totality to which all phases of thought and life contribute their share; in its pursuit every man must give play to the highest side of his nature. It is progressive, and can only be progressively revealed. It is eternal and may, happily, for ever be sought without permitting itself to be fully grasped.

While we are engaged in the long process of developing a universal system, there is one criterion which is always to be kept closely in sight: philosophy ought always to benefit conduct. Reality is what we feel, not merely what we think about. "If we were purely thinking beings," says F. C. S. Schiller, "[agnosticism] would obviously be the right attitude toward matters unknown. But as we have also to act, and as action requires *practical certainty* . . . no agnostic can live for five minutes without

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indulging in acts involving a belief or disbelief in some of the unknowables he had solemnly forsworn." [1]

"Beliefs are rules for action," says Professor James,[2] "and the whole function of thinking is but one step in the production of habits of action. . . . What exact thing do you *practically* mean by 'One,' when you call the universe One? is the first question you must ask. In what ways does the oneness come home to your own personal life? How can you act differently toward a universe which is one?"

The answer to this question we have been considering throughout these pages. It is the fully educated, spiritual, social life, of equanimity yet of service, of self-control yet of self-expression, which is the real justification of a profound belief in life's unity. On the other hand, it is just this richly practical life which furnishes the choicest data of progressively constructive philosophy.

All this, you say, presupposes much knowledge, and implies that one is deeply in earnest, willing to work long and patiently, and that one already possesses a general knowledge of philosophic thought. Yet the whole matter is surprisingly simple. In each of us is the clue to life's profoundest mystery. That which we seek to know is not something outside of us. No power can come to us from without and declare the truth. It must be perceived in one's

[1] *Riddles of the Sphinx.*

[2] *Philosophical Conceptions and Practical Results.*

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own mind. Each of us has had experience, and that is enough. The essential is to see it in right relations.

The utmost another mind may do for you is to narrate its experiences in the same search. And the reason why some have advanced so much beyond others is that instead of attending many lectures and reading many books, they have selected a few fundamental principles and thought upon them day and night to some individual philosophical conclusion. Such minds will give you in a few words the very essence of their system of practical metaphysics. For example, Jesus' saying, "Seek first the kingdom of heaven . . . and all these things shall be added unto you." If you understand and adopt this ideal, nothing more is needed but to live it.

One is constantly overwhelmed by the magnitude of one's task in the endeavour to grasp life's meaning. Yet, after all, it is the one task that calls out all that is in us. To know the goodness which dwells within, to live it in daily life, then rationalise it, this is the sum and substance of it all. A thousand theories of the universe may be formulated by as many minds; a thousand poets may sing of life as it appeals to them, and innumerable species, forms, forces, and substances may reveal the creative power. But there is only one object of it all, one source of it all, one Spirit imbuing it all. To know this Spirit in all the variety of life's changing experiences, this is the simplicity of thought. To

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carry this consciousness into every hour of daily toil, this is the essence of righteous conduct. And to appeal directly to this one source in moments of doubt and pain, this is the one panacea not only for all trouble, but for all the difficulties of philosophy.

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CHAPTER XIII

ORGANIC PERFECTION

The great Idea baffles wit,
Language falters under it.

—EMERSON.

FEW facts are of greater significance in the interpretation of the universe than the discovery that the higher forms of life are organic. That is, the physical being is not a mere aggregation of precisely similar parts; it is composed of differing organs or members whose functions mutually contribute to the well-being and development of the whole. No part is adequate by itself. No part is independent. The existence of each is made possible through the co-presence and activity of all the other parts. The whole is a society of related individuals, whose utility as well as whose beauty is dependent upon limitation and co-operation.

This familiar truth is unquestionably the most direct clue to the constitution and meaning of the highest orders of life: the mental, moral, social, and spiritual. Its significance is perfectly clear, so far as our physical existence is concerned. But we are apt to neglect the bearing of this profound discovery

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upon the problems which perplex us in our endeavours to grasp the right relationship between individuals; we do not realise the light it throws upon our obscure contests with life, upon our personal struggles, and the problems of evil and injustice. In this chapter I shall therefore accept the guidance which this truth offers, develop its implications, and seek its aid in solving the enigmas of our social life.

From the outset of our inquiry, this organic relationship of mutually dependent parts has been the implied basis both of education and philosophy. Every domain of evolution teaches this great truth, without which our modern belief in the unity of things would be impossible. Education is utterly inadequate unless it find harmonious opportunities not merely for self-expression but for service, not alone for beauty and truth but for utility; and that many-sided variety which counteracts the tendencies of the specialist, the intellect, and the emotions. Philosophy is not a merely accidental assemblage of the facts of the world; it is an organic unity of all known data both rationally and spiritually interpreted. The great lesson of our study of the criteria of truth is that each criterion is relative and must be qualified by the results of all the others. The results of philosophy were found to be negative only while one criterion was employed; it is the constructive result of many contributions, imperfect in themselves, which is alone satisfactory. We frequently found it necessary to supplement our intellectual discussion by an appeal to spiritual experience. Yet

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we discovered many reasons for guarded acceptance of a purely intuitive philosophy. Thus balance between extremes proved to be the only sound principle. Thus the logical outcome of our analysis is a synthetic theory of life in which this omnipresent principle of adjustment between extremes shall serve as clue to the unity and beauty of the whole.

With this synthetic ideal in view, let us regard the entire universe as an organism. By the universe I mean literally and inclusively all that exists, not only the worlds of nature and of human society, not alone the realms of mind and morals; but also the commonwealth of individual souls and the ultimate Being or Spirit. Let this great sum total be regarded as the largest organic whole. If it be in reality such an organism, that is, a fellowship of finite souls; an abiding, sustaining Father; and a relatively distinct world of nature, it is such a whole because this kind of unity is higher, more beautiful, than the mere totality, the absolutely identical whole without parts of which pantheism conceives.

The thought seems a bold one only because we are accustomed to deem God sufficient unto himself. But if he be self-adequate, why are we here, why is nature here; how happens it that nature and human society are purposive organisms? If the nature of God be fulfilled only through the organisms which reveal him, he is so far dependent upon them, imperfect without them. If dependent, his organisms contribute somewhat to his life; if the organisms are dependent upon him, he contributes

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somewhat to them. Therefore the relation between God and these organisms is similar to the relationship between the minor and major parts of an organism, although indescribably greater, infinitely more complex than the relations of any organism commonly known to man, and only figuratively typified by this imperfect illustration.

Let us, therefore, start with the proposition that nature contributes her share, that man is a necessary factor, and that Spirit or God is the essential life and source whose being is thus perfectly manifested. Spirit would not be "fair and good" alone. Nature could not exist by itself. Human life would be impossible without both nature and Spirit. All these constitute one universe only by being relatively, organically distinct. Therefore, man and God and nature are to be understood only in the light of their organic mutuality and relationship, as parts of a universal whole which perpetually seeks absolute perfection through infinite variety.

Thus considered, the organic whole is to be understood only through perfect comprehension of the varying relationships of all the parts. Each detail in the life of man or nature is related to the history of all the other parts within the divine whole. Each part is individually defective yet widely contributory, perfect only through the perfection of the whole. It contributes and is contributed to. It is dependent, and it sustains the dependent. Without it the perfect whole could not be, yet it is relatively of little consequence. Just as the universal whole would

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be fatally maimed by the removal of God or man or nature, so would a minor whole be injured by robbing it of a part or function.

The glory and utility of any part, like the intellectual life, or the experiences known as pain and evil, consists in its organic limitations. An organ must stand for something definite, or it is neither beautiful nor useful. Viewed by itself, it may seem ugly; viewed in relation, when qualified, held in check and supplemented, it is inexpressibly beautiful.

A man may deem himself utterly unfit to live while he regards himself negatively, while he thinks of what he is not and what he cannot do. He may condemn himself for not being able to do what other men do. He may be constantly condemned by those who pretend to understand him, because he does not accomplish what they think he ought to accomplish. Out of his environment he may seem cold, sullen, and unsociable. Put him in his environment, and he straightway becomes a god. That which seemed a hardship now proves to be a blessing, because it is seen in right relations. That which appeared to be a cruel and ugly limitation is now found to be the precise condition of organic productibility.

There is an incalculably valuable lesson in this discovery. Nine-tenths of all the negative criticism and self-condemnation in the world would cease if this knowledge could become universal.

The necessity of organic limitation may be further illustrated by the nature and development of an idea.

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We know very well from experience that we make no headway in precise thinking while the attention wanders. We must concentrate, put all ideas out of mind except the one central thought, the apex of the pyramid of consciousness, whose broadest relationships we propose to master.

Looked at from the negative side, it is a decided limitation that the mind can give entire attention to but one idea at a time. From the positive point of view, definiteness of comprehension would be possible under no other condition. The entire process of mental development is the gathering at a central point of all our conscious powers, that the mind may grasp and retain a single concept, a particular or a general principle. And the conscious mind as an organ is supplemented by the subconscious, which when well trained amply compensates for the limitations of active consciousness.

Every distinct idea is a point of view from which we regard our experience for the time being. For example, we study the operation of natural forces and learn that all are ruled by law. We touch a hot substance and the hand is burned. Thereupon the mind, summoning all its wisdom from the subconscious, momentarily rises to the plane of universal vision, seizes the great concept of uniform world-law, and concludes that everywhere under similar conditions similar effects would follow. The mind then deduces from this great principle, inductively perceived, certain applications for use in daily life. It declares that, since action and reaction are equal,

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there can be no activity of the particular type in question from which we can escape a certain result; that consequently we must hold ourselves responsible.

The mind reaches this definite, practical conclusion by holding the thought in one direction until it grasps certain relationships as seen from one point only. The definite process of thought is possible only through exclusion and subordination. It must shut out other implications, even at the risk of doing them injustice, until it grasps the full significance of this. Thus a definite conscious process is the discovery of a particular series of relations, just as the description of a tree is possible only by giving an account of its environment, the surrounding earth in which it is embedded, the atmosphere which plays upon it, the power of gravity which holds it in place and maintains its shape, the sunlight without which its life and growth are impossible.

Here is a very important point. One cannot describe an object in nature, or even the vaguest fancy which a mind ever conceived, as an object apart, unrelated. The central thought which the mind selects for temporary consideration, to the exclusion of all others, is as nearly independent as anything can be. Yet it is a central thought only because there are grouped about it many other thoughts which throw light upon it. And the most abstract law which the mind can formulate, the most metaphysically abstruse doctrine, is made such only by contrast and comparison with the concrete world

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of warm, loving, and tender beings and things which furnishes the substance of all our thinking.

The mind could not formulate a law unless there were uniformly functioning forces to describe. These could not be regular functioning forces unless there were something upon which they could act. One force alone is inconceivable: force is known only in relation to resistance, to opposing forces. One substance alone is as inconceivable as one colour, one sound, one man or woman. All these are known only by contrast, in relation; in other words, organically.

Even God is known only through what he does, what he is in respect to the world which manifests his wisdom and power and beauty. Ignorance of this obvious fact is responsible for all the extra-natural deities, "Absolutes" and artificial realities with which the growth of philosophical thought has been encumbered.

Love is a relation; it is impossible alone. Wisdom is due to concrete experience; it is not abstract. Beauty is a relation in which things are beheld. An emotion is a state felt in regard to somewhat; the mind is incapable of feeling without something to feel. And so one might exhaust the universe and fail to find a concept small or great which has any intelligibility apart from relation; and relation is of course possible only through different organs whose qualities are variously associated.

In the ethical realm, duty is a meaningless term without the relationship of the one who imposes the

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obligation and the one who disregards or fulfils it. No man can be either righteous or unrighteous alone. The terms "good" and "bad" possess significance only when applied to something, or some deed, which does or does not fulfil an ideal relation, a purpose.

It is a related purpose which gives centrality either to human life or to the universe at large. Even though existence be an enigma so far as its ultimate origin is concerned, our own finite reasoning is great enough to lead the mind back from the wonderful system of nature, which modern science so beautifully describes, to the purposive harmony which necessarily exists as its source. And we know that a purpose is possible only through an ideal which is to be realised by the adjustment of means to ends. It is the obvious presence of a world-purpose, of universal adjustments of means to ends, which leads the mind to posit the existence of an ultimate Being wise enough to be the source of this underlying harmony and thereby adapt all organic activities to one end.

The conclusion follows easily enough that the universe is not merely a purposive organism of mutually dependent contributory parts, but that it is adapted to the attainment of the highest perfection, the greatest good, not of the greatest number, but of the whole. The universe does not exist for man alone, nor for nature, nor simply to complete the life of God, but for the whole. As so constituted, it would seem that it could not be better.

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Granting that the world-plan includes the solution of the social question, the total organism seems to be perfect, wholly beautiful, good, and just. One would like to say, it *is* perfect. But, as we have already noted in the preceding chapter, adequate knowledge is possible only when a thing is done. The utmost we can say is that, although we have no absolute standard of comparison, the universe probably could not be better than it is.

An ideally perfect adjustment of all means to the highest possible end, signifies not only that the nature, place, and meaning of any part, however small, is to be understood only in the light of its temporary relation to the perfect whole at any given moment, but that it is also to be seen through the perspective of eternity. It means that as all organs, functions, and individuals are regarded from the point of view of their *progressive* fitness as members of a whole whose perfection can be attained only through entire eternity, many of these ideals are likely to be misunderstood if regarded only from the standpoint of time, or when viewed by those who are ignorant of the profound significance of organic perfection. Just as an organ or function is insignificant by itself, so that which seems ugly or evil when erroneously regarded by itself, in relation to its immediate temporal environment, instead of in the light of its meaning for the progressing whole, may appear beautiful and good when viewed in its total eternal, therefore in its true, relation. The perspective of eternity is thus the only one

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from which our sins and evils are seen in a light which reveals their good side: evil is still evil, but its existence in an ethical universe is in the long run justified by the experience gained in contact and by contrast with it. Consequently, there must be a general revision of opinions, a reformation both of our terminology and our methods, if we are to understand the social cosmos in the light of its movement towards completion in the eternal whole.

It follows also that since the perfect ideal is conceived in eternity and realised in time, we must take into account the minute stages and detailed conditions of natural evolution. That which arouses impatience and condemnation when viewed by itself, inspires confidence and admiration when beheld in the light of its outcome.

Since the universe is attaining perfection through evolution, and not by an instantaneous process, it must be because a higher standard can be realised than through a sudden leap into relations of entire harmony. Moreover, if absolute perfection were instantly attained, the universe would thereafter be as cold and motionless, as unprogressive as a marble mosaic. The beauty of the Spirit is so great, the ideal of universal organic perfection is so high, that it requires the relative perfection of all these successive moments of eternity to manifest it. The universe seems perfect at any given moment when thus understood. Yet the moment passes and reveals a new beauty, equally great yet different; and the universe shall prove to be perfect in the highest

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sense only on condition that these successive displays of the infinite grandeur never cease.

It is obviously matter of opinion whether the total universe reveals progress. We call it progress, in our finite speech. We even speak of God as "progressing," and doubtless he is, in a sense, if the spiritually creative, ethically free republic of human souls contribute their share of fresh experiences. But this alleged progress might prove to be only an endless series of variations played upon the great harp of life by means of notes whose essential number is eternally the same. In this way the conservation of energy would be maintained, yet there would be endless room for experiment, for the production of novelties unknown even to the Father who, if he foreknew all possible combinations and decreed their number for all time, would have nothing to gain from organic self-manifestation; and this absolute foreordination would make ethical freedom and individual creativeness utterly impossible.

The independence and beauty of the part must not then be lost in, overruled, or absorbed by the whole. It adds its fullest measure of beauty and productiveness to the whole only by being of relative worth in itself. For I am not arguing that it is right for a part insubordinately to suffer that the whole may be glorified. That would be applying to the universe the demand of the modern capitalist that the labourer shall be a degraded cog in an economic machine, in order that the ideals of the trust may be realised.

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The part is, sooner or later, to find its full glory, adequate self-expression, and complete development through the service of its fellow parts; otherwise the universe is unfair and perfection wears a cruel blemish. It is just because the social problem is not yet solved that we cannot say "perfection now is."

The individual is to be understood in relation to the universal, but the universal is also qualified by the individual. The temporal is organically related to the eternal; the eternal is nothing without the temporal. The eternal is made up of the temporal, the universal of the individual: there is no absolute-in-itself. The temporal retains its specific meaning, as for instance, the dates, 1453, 1492, 1876. Likewise, the glory of man is that he is continuously an unabsorbed historical individual, as, for example, Socrates, Jesus, Shakespeare, Darwin, and those who contributed to the evolution and life-work of these, without whom, because they were organs only, their work would have been impossible.

From another point of view, the eternal is the great unattained. As typical of absolute perfection, it is ideally true, but not actually real. It is ever the goal which the universe seeks, yet the pleasure of the game consists in never making it. It is the sword of Damocles which must not fall. If anything were absolute in itself there could be no organic perfection.

I need not, however, dwell on these general limitations of organic perfection, since our chief concern is to discover how our own limitations make it

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possible both for us to exist and to adjust ourselves to one another. The profoundest aspect of the universe, viewed as a progressive process, is the continuously self-communicating Spirit, active through all eternity, yet carrying forward the detailed life which alone makes possible the adjustment of all means to ends with the perfection of the whole in view. Practically, then, Spirit must be regarded as progressing, if not progressive, and the individual should adjust himself to the perpetually advancing life within all evolution.

No part can lie outside of the divine activity to which all beings are organically related, since it might then function against, not for, the whole. It follows that no man, no state, no nation, however powerful, can ever permanently injure the universe. All relative injuries to the social cosmos are, as we have seen in Chapter VIII., due to man's ignorance, to temporary slavery and the infliction of slavery. So far as tendencies in the natural or social cosmos are permitted to go off on tangents, it is because the experience thus gained can be turned to creative account by the Organ of organs whose function it is both to carry forward and perfect, and to maintain the equilibrium of the universe.

Man is thus made aware of his limitations by the sharp reactions which follow all excesses. All life, all education is a discovery of those inevitable conditions with which, as Emerson tells us, the universe is invested, but which "the unwise seek to dodge." Educational experiment followed by philosophical

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thought shows man what he can do and what he cannot do. For not all things are possible unto him: only those which when turned to account by the Achiever of all shall not only contribute to the best life of the individual, but to the welfare and beauty of the whole. Not all things are possible even with God—it seems audacious to say it, but the universe declares it — because by virtue of his goodness and love he is dedicated to those deeds which make for righteousness.

The glory of man consists in doing his individual work and in attempting no other. In one direction all is clear before him. In all others he is sure, sooner or later, to encounter insurmountable obstacles. For as the universe is constituted so that all men shall turn to righteousness at last, the Achiever sees to it that something is placed in every man's way which will eventually bring him to judgment, so that, having thought it all out for himself, he will see the economy, and finally the wisdom and beauty of righteousness.

The desideratum obviously is that every man come to consciousness of his profound relationship with Spirit, nature, and humanity; that he realise both his dependence upon them, his utter nothingness without them; and also their dependence on him through that which he and he alone can contribute. At first sight this mutual dependence seems obvious enough; every-day life proves it. But if it were truly recognised the social problem would already be solved.

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This discovery not only means the knowledge of man's relativity, as we have considered it in Chapter X., but the understanding of the positive nature and worth of individuality in all its relationships. It implies so much that it is difficult even to suggest it; it is the discovery of a lifetime. Our entire history is an account of the manner in which we have in part learned this great truth.

Suffice it that when man really knows himself, he learns that deep within his being there is a principle of organic unity whereby his life is persistently held together as one whole. However varied his external experiences, personal relationships, eccentricities, planes of consciousness, and characteristics, more or less mutable during a constantly changing lifetime, he is fundamentally one individual, as the universe is always one universe. There is a principle of cohesion, a profound harmony of parts, a unity which is stronger than the principle of variety which characterises its manifold relationships with Spirit, man, and nature. The centripetal force is never permanently overcome by the centrifugal — that is, so far as we have any evidence.

Some might argue that the universe would be as well served if individuality should disintegrate when a man's chief work is done. But this would be at the expense of one half of our ideal, and if there are many planes of existence yet to come man may not yet know his chief work. It is unfair to judge by the standards of this life only.

In the profoundest sense, this unity amid variety

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which makes each individual for ever and solely himself, is a distinctive point of view from which the entire universe is seen, a unique attitude toward life, a certain temperamental and peculiar method of experiencing and thinking, an intimately private freedom, and an emphatically personal mode of action. No one in the wide universe is the duplicate of another. No one can imitate, do the work of, or in reality interfere with another. When this combination was made, if it ever was made, the model was thrown away, and no possible attempt at recombining would ever bring about the same result.

When a man learns this greatest of facts in regard to his individual life he becomes centred, poised, and no longer fears defeat. Any threatened defeat now seems utterly absurd. He knows that he is grounded in the eternal constitution of things, inseparably a part of that Reality beyond which there is no other. He is superior to any misfortune, any calamity, or supposed enemy, either in space or time. Whatever happens, be it death itself, transportation to any part of the universe, or enforced sleep during a thousand years, will find him in equanimity, ready to discover its educational value.

It is therefore a part of the ministry of the Spirit for each man to consider in all confidence, yet in deepest humility and gratitude, the bearing of his individuality upon the work of the universe; for he can contribute nothing greater than that. He should regard himself as an organ of the whole,

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essential to the whole, so placed that there is abundant power and wisdom to enable him to accomplish his work.

He is to be concerned solely with the regulation of his own attitude, the doing of his own work; never with the regulation of the attitudes or activities of others. As we have repeatedly shown, no man can know what another individual ought to do. That knowledge is attainable by one soul alone.

Yet the discovery of the organic meaning of individuality is a means to the greater end, organic service. Although the individual should not dictate, every experience which comes into his life should have meaning for him in relation to his work for the world. It should help to put him in right social relations, that he may the more fully express the "constructive individuality" which is the highest ideal of education.

True knowledge of individuality, as we have already shown, not only does not lead to mere individualism, but indicates that there must be radical reform in current individualistic tendencies.

Previous to the discovery of man's true place in life he is cast about by circumstance; he is burdened with fear, is passionate, resentful, jealous, self-protective, intolerant, exclusive; in a word, selfish. When he knows himself as only he can know, he learns that these selfish attitudes are utterly foolish expenditures of force. For no one can really injure him. No one can pilfer his true wealth. The cleverest imitator could never borrow his most

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individual ideas. No alleged enemy could possibly intrude on his truest rights, or deprive him of his real freedom. Every experience, without the least exception, must affect him according to his own, not another's, state of development and attitude towards it.

Consequently, there is no need of the barriers which the individual usually rears about himself. His one concern should be to fulfil his true function in relation to the whole, to be true to himself. His one standard should be, what is right or best for him as an organ of the whole: the supreme guidance of the Spirit. All else should be subordinate to that.

To be loyal to the whole, each man must have as profound first-hand knowledge of it as possible. For, remember, individuality is due to many-sided variety in unity. The individual is related to all that exists, personal experience with which furnishes the occasion for self-manifestation. He must become truly universal, that he may give adequate expression to that in him which completes the universal.

No man can learn his true nature if he dwells alone, no man can learn it merely through contact with society, among his books, with nature, alone with God. He must learn it both within and without, through solitude and society, the head and the heart, even supplementing his days and months of diligent search for truth by days and months when he becomes passive and lets truth pursue him. Only by the balance, the mutual supplementation

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of all experiences and all thoughts, in all environments, seen in all possible perspectives, through all that is in him, may he hope to attain either adequacy of self-knowledge, or adequacy of self-expression through service.

For, as we have repeatedly noted, he can grasp only one idea or experience at a time. Now he must give play to his spiritual nature, and now subject his thought to the most rigidly sceptical criteria of truth. Now he must seek solitude, and now society. Only the well-balanced man is truly spiritual, profoundly philosophical, or thoroughly educated.

The history of man's development, his attempts to achieve perfection through hermit methods and exclusive creeds, proves by contrast the need of many-sidedness, beauty, rounded completion, as the only pathway to that fulness of soul-expression in which his organic utility consists. The very attempt to attain "liberation" by ascetic and egoistic methods shows how intimately man is related to all that exists, to how slight a degree he is independent.

The many-sidedness of individual consciousness is also an illustration of the organic character of our existence.

Since the days of Descartes, it has been customary to begin all philosophical inquiry with consciousness as the basic fact, the surest datum of experience; and this has practically meant your consciousness or mine. As you look within, now, and as I also introspect, no fact proves more fundamental. Yet

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an examination of the question, How can consciousness exist ? reveals the great truth that it is neither possible nor good alone. It must be consciousness *of* something. It must also be consciousness *by* a self or soul that is conscious. The very life of consciousness is knowledge of relations, of objects which are brought into intimate relation with our perceptive organism.

Furthermore, consciousness is possible only through change, activity, life. We cannot dwell on one set of relations long at a time. There must be external movement as the source of internal awareness. Consciousness without life is impossible. But life is a system of relations.

In general terms, consciousness is the inner translation into the percepts and concepts by which the mind pictures or represents the world of relations. In other words, consciousness is organic. It is not the totality of being, as some have assumed. The universe is not a mere world of thought. It is not a merely conscious representation, with nothing represented. Relations are real. Change is real. Evolution is a living fact. It is the function of consciousness to report what transpires in the real, living world of time and space relations.

Thus a critical examination of what we mean by consciousness, leads us step by step out of the subjective, egoistic world into the world of Spirit, nature, and human society, without which even the most limited consciousness is impossible. This apparently commonplace conclusion is really the

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refutation of all systems of subjectivism, mysticism, and the like. And thus the deepest, subtlest, and most troublesome stronghold of egoism is removed. The finite self is in truth nothing without consciousness, but in this one fact resides all the evidence needed to develop a philosophy of organic human society.

Without attempting to develop all the logical steps, let us simply note that the most suggestive series of relationships which make consciousness possible is the social series. The very dawning of self-consciousness in infancy is closely associated with the discovery that other selves exist. The individual activity of the soul is, of course, the dynamic factor of prime consequence. Without the brooding presence of the Spirit no consciousness is possible. Yet it is the social factor which furnishes the occasion, and thus lays the foundation of that great indebtedness which every human soul owes to mother, father, and the host of associates with whose co-operation all its habits are acquired, the relation of objects in the surrounding environment is learned, language is received as a gift from thousands and millions of ancestors, and all the foundations are laid for its future education, social life, and individual experience. The psychological, social, and ethical relations and obligations are so many and so great that the mind is overwhelmed by them. But it is important to take ample time to think them out because of the tremendous indebtedness which the soul is under. The majority

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of men require all possible spurs to righteousness, and no kind of philosophising leads more directly from egoism to altruism than thought about these intimate relationships without which one's existence as an organism amidst organisms is impossible. It leads the mind instinctively to the glad hope that a day may come when all men shall awaken to the beauties and opportunities of our mutual existence as one great social organism.

Apply the thought to your own life, for a moment, and recollect your relationship to parents, grandparents, and past generations; to teachers, books, friends, associates, possibly to wife or husband and children, to say nothing of your relationships with thousands whom you do not know and may never see, who labour to produce the commodities of life, and all that makes existence productively and pleasurably possible for you.

Consider, too, the inferior condition in which the majority of people are held through ignorance, selfishness, and grinding oppression. Consider by contrast the eternal principles of liberty, equality and freedom which we have dwelt upon in another chapter. All are equal before the eternal law. Spiritually speaking, each is directly, organically related to the Father, the only inequality being the difference in spiritual enlightenment and receptivity. Each may draw upon that source to make the ideal real. Yet each is dependent upon all, and all must know the truths of organic perfection before freedom shall become universal. Consequently, the

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great privilege of the enlightened is to quicken to consciousness the spirit of freedom, the close relationship between soul and soul and the great Oversoul.

The supreme thought, then, worth more than all the other points in our argument, is the spiritual ideal, the possibility open before every human soul of becoming a function of the Spirit, a minister of that power and life, that peace and love which touches the hearts and feeds the souls of men. He that loses his merely individual life shall find it. The law of the Christ is the highest law of organic perfection, the Christ spirit made social is the supreme triumph of all the powers of evolution.

Education, viewed from the standpoint of organic perfection, thus leads to profound consideration of all aspects of ethical and social philosophy. It is the application in its noblest sense of the philosophical ideal. It is the fruition of the philosopher's broadest thought, quickened and carried forward by the spirit of love and sympathy. It applies to the whole of life, in its united sense, as the union of head and heart, the individual and society, working co-operatively to carry out the divine ideal. It applies to the passing details of life; it ends only with immortality. And so to the conception of immortality we must turn, with the hope that that, too, shall prove to be a part of our educational life, the fruition of our individual and collective ethical and spiritual freedom.

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CHAPTER XIV

IMMORTALITY

A better life this life concealed.—BROWNING.

IN the great Sanskrit epic, the Mahabharata, when the hero, Yudhisthira, is asked by Dhama what is the most wonderful thing in the world, he replies that it is the persistent belief of mankind in their own deathlessness, in spite of the fact that everywhere around they are continually witnessing the sorrows and pains of death. And, if he had lived in these modern days, the ancient hero might have added the arguments and facts of physiology, all of which give support to the theory that death ends all. The evidence in favour of death may be said to have accumulated more rapidly than arguments for continued existence. Yet belief in immortality is no less strong — outside of agnostic circles. The data of psychical research have been steadily making in favour of continued existence, and a huge volume of evidence awaits those who are sufficiently unprejudiced to read it.

I shall not, however, in this chapter consider the problem from the point of view of scientific inquiry, but from its moral and spiritual side, with the hope

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that the discussion may bring into prominence certain aspects of the problem which have been neglected in the zeal for psychical research. For it is not when we examine the data of external spirit manifestation that we approach the problem most directly. It is when we turn immediately to the soul itself, when we await and interpret its highest inspirations, when the soul's relationship with the Father is discovered in the spiritual life.

The spiritual life is not the result of scientific research. It does not come by observation. Man may consciously lay the foundations for it: he may become virtuous, trustful, abounding in repose, in peace and love. We have already considered certain aspects of it in our study of equanimity. But the qualities of the highest spiritual life surpass our merely analytical understanding. The Spirit comes as the crowning touch, while we go on living the noblest life. It chooses and inspires whom it will. Its inspirations outstrip the highest flights of self-conscious thought.

The supreme assurance of immortality is the life which deserves it, that spirituality which would be rudely marred and shattered if immortality were untrue. Unless we are one and all fated to be suddenly transported to a heaven of eternal perfection, whether we are good or bad—this seems improbable from what we know of the moral constitution of things — unless we are spiritually immortal despite character and conduct, it seems probable that a certain kind of life on our part is a better preparation

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than any other. Thus considered, immortality is the natural, one might almost say the inevitable, outcome of the righteous life. All evolution tends that way; that is, all evolution makes for righteousness. The universe is just. It grants an equal opportunity to each, and has placed every possible aid where man may voluntarily accept or reject it.

Immortality is thus a logical consequence, a necessity of the ethical life. Our entire argument for organic social perfection fails unless it be clear that the compensations and opportunities of the future supplement the unjust and unequal conditions under which many spend every day and hour of this earth life. Unless a future life resolve all these differences the universe is unjust. Unless every individual some time come to consciousness of his organic place in the social cosmos and realise the ideals of service, our highest ideals are only myths; for our point of view is strictly universal, it acknowledges no partialities or subordinations.

The future life, then, will undoubtedly be the field in which the social problem will first be solved. But its solution on earth is the greater ideal, because it is undoubtedly far more difficult. The present social order is the chief centre of interest, and the thought of immortality is of great philosophical value only because it furnishes the ethical supplement needed to complete the organic limitations of our present existence.

But this is an old and familiar argument for immortality, that the moral order is imperfect without

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it; that it is ethically open to all, otherwise the universe is unjust; and after the arguments of the foregoing chapter it needs only a reference here. Since all reform begins within and with the individual, the important point is not merely to awaken to the thought of immortality as an organic, ethical demand, but as involving a practical, educational, and spiritual attitude toward the world of to-day. However it be regarded, our conscious attitude has somewhat to do with the future life; and whether or not the will is in any way finally decisive, it evidently possesses the power to postpone or hasten the day of the soul's awakening into the fuller existence. It seems perfectly normal and right, then, to set apart periods for the study of the soul and the probable conditions of its survival. For we are already, here and now, exercising functions which are undoubtedly to be the foundation of life in the future state. By a study of these functions, we may gradually prepare, then help others to prepare for the transition from the lower consciousness to the higher.

Sooner or later there must be such an awakening, and it would be a great boon if it could begin in the present life as a part of our closer social relationship. All changes are the results of evolution; if there has not been an awakening in the flesh, it must come after the present phase of life has ceased. After the transition, many souls are doubtless in a dazed condition for months, while the apprenticeship of the majority probably extends through years. On the other hand, there are souls now in the flesh

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undoubtedly better acquainted with the conditions of the next plane of life, than a large percentage of those who have already begun to understand their new experience.

What part of our nature is likely to survive, and how may we become more conscious of it?

Throughout this book we have contended for the existence of a spiritual faculty or organ of receptivity. In the foregoing chapter we have also found evidence for the existence of an unresolvable, indivisible unit, the spiritual ego beneath and owning all these complexities of moods and selves which we call our conscious and subconscious life. However varied the surface, regardless of the conflict of selves, at heart each of us is one soul. The probability is that, as life becomes more abounding in wisdom and repose, this fundamental unity will stand out more and more.

One of the first and profoundest discoveries, when we begin really to know ourselves, is this fact of spiritual unity. In our thoughtless days of unacquaintance with the soul we seemed to be many selves. We were continually cast about, now at the mercy of dominating minds, now prisoners of our own passions. But, when we began to be at home in our mental world, we also began to be centred, to be conscious that deep within this confusion of selves there is a soul capable not only of controlling all passions and conflicting forces, but of holding all phases of personality together as one consistent, ethical individual.

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One of the essentials in the great work of preparation for the future life is therefore the cultivation of that kind of thinking, that kind of repose, which gives a grasp of the inner life as a unit, as the meeting point of the various tendencies which make for organic perfection, for our highest education. This is true concentration, true meditation, as opposed to the vague, incautious receptivity which often characterises the experience known as "entering the silence." We must have centrality if we are to have concentration; and centrality means the taking up of the loose reins, the conflicting forces, and wilful thoughts, that they may know their master.

A certain amount of vague experimentation and psychic perplexity is doubtless a necessary introduction to this realm of deeper self-mastery. But it is advisable to have done with it as soon as possible. No soul can serve two masters; and, if one cares more for psychic visions, faces, forms, and uncanny sensations than for the Spirit, the Spirit will not come. One must summon all one's powers of discernment, surely all one's common sense,[1] if one is to enter where there is so much that is illusory. Equally necessary is it to avoid becoming too subjectively interested in self. For the spiritual life is the life of humility, not of egotism, the messenger of love, not the prisoner of self; it is beautiful only in organic relation.

[1] It is also essential to apply the sceptical criteria of truth which we have considered in Chapter XII.

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Thus the discrimination between egoism and altruism is one of the essentials of this higher development. It is when I begin to distinguish between merely personal motives and inclinations, on the one hand, and the higher promptings, on the other, that I pass from the superficial, transient self to the centralised soul which is fit to survive. I must attain that stage of insight where I am no longer hoodwinked by myself. I must be perfectly honest. I must know myself through and through. Out of the tendencies thus discovered, I must take firm hold of those which express the soul at its best, leaving all else to fall into oblivion through lack of attention.

This power of self-command becomes in time the basis of a larger spiritual experience. For, when one has learned to select the divine promptings from among the merely personal, one may substitute the higher sources of knowledge for the lower, even in regard to matters of minor importance. Under this head, as evidence of the soul's existence as an immortal spirit, functioning independently of matter, I class the higher impressions, guidances, spiritual insights, intuitions, and the power to communicate with other souls at a distance. I do not now refer to messages from excarnate souls, although guidance may sometimes come in this way, but rather to the soul's native ability to obtain knowledge by a quicker process than through the physical senses, or by the function of reason. Take, for example, the ability which many possess to describe the states of mind

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and body of people at a distance, to find their way by spiritual impression in a strange town or country, also the power to heal others at a distance through a purely spiritual process. All these experiences, together with the transference of definite thought to a distant soul, and some of the phenomena which we have included in our study of the subconscious mind, point to the existence of finer senses, of quicker and subtler modes of feeling and communicating. They show that we can in a measure already overcome space, that we are only partly aware of our greatest powers.

These dimly perceived experiences and partly quickened faculties are doubtless to be our habitual modes of perception and activity in our more spiritual life. These powers grow in proportion as we believe in and trust them. By regarding them as independently spiritual, we may form a fairly definite idea of our future experience, which must be characterised by a far wider range of information, a much freer and easier method of communication between souls, and a more efficient and rapid mode of action.

These endeavours to gain knowledge by intuition, rather than through the ordinary and slower channels, put the mind into the habit of expecting spiritual help. Thus the subconscious life is brought into play, and greater receptivity is developed. The soul also becomes more self-reliant. It discovers new resources. It becomes more at home in its own inner world. And all this is a preparation for

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an existence which is to be continuously maintained without the stimulus of physical sensation.

Therefore make it a rule of life to consult the Spirit first of all, on any subject, however trivial, if it be something really worth while, especially when you wish to know which of two alternatives to choose in matters of conscience and the heart, when in need of help in times of illness and sorrow. Ask what way you shall turn, and wait the impression. Ask how things are to be. Ask what is right, what *is* as opposed to what seems, or as contrasted with mere theory, and so try to learn directly from the realities of life instead of by the devious methods of conventional inquiry and speculation.

Another mode of discovering the real nature of the soul and its probable future state is to take careful note of the conditions under which the highest inspirations come, also to note the superior character of these guidances.

In the still, deeply peaceful hours of the soul, one experiences a freedom, an extension of the sphere of feeling and thought, which is of itself sufficient evidence to many minds that the soul already dwells in eternity. One passes, as it were, into another world, a purer, happier, larger world. The thought is drawn away from the mere moment to the contemplation of great wholes or masses of time. It is drawn away from any particular region of space. It feels at one with the universe. It is in close touch with the heart of things.

One is convinced that this experience, although

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brief, and as yet far beyond the will to control, is nevertheless nearer the real experience, nearest the dreamless life. From this temporary point of view, our daily experience seems only a dream, an experience beset with manifold illusions and imprisoning conditions, a phase of existence which the soul must pass through, so that, by thus dreaming and evolving, by becoming unselfish and true, it may know and value the spiritual life, and cleave to that forevermore.

If this be so, if ours is the dream life and that the reality, there is every reason to cultivate these hours of reposeful contemplation, that we may draw power thence, and gradually win our freedom from the sense life, at the same time turning this power to practical account in the expression and ministry of the Spirit.

Oh, what a great, inexpressibly profound and beautiful truth it is that here and now we are denizens of a spiritual world, that we live in eternity, intimately and for ever in the immediate presence of the eternal Spirit, the great All-Father!

Let us pause for a moment to realise the meaning of this supreme truth; for from the present point of view it is the first essential, the surest approach to genuine knowledge of the soul, the best preparation for our freer life.

First, this real world of Spirit and the soul, although organically related to it, is in a sense superior to the bondages of the time-world. We are not to think of the immortal world as a realm where we

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may have successive incarnations. All that is secondary, and is another subject. The soul gains experience and expresses itself through the world of time, possibly in more than one physical existence. But in itself, as we are now considering it, it is above time, in a limitless world where one is not under compulsion to meet an appointment or catch a train. In itself the soul is an individual manifestation of the eternal Father. In this, the Father's timeless world, the source and ruler of all lesser realms of being, there is peace, uninterrupted love, entire restfulness.

Let us not forget this its most helpful aspect. Its power, its peace, is like food whereof we may eat. Its love and beauty are spiritual elements which the soul may assimilate and manifest. Its atmosphere we may breathe and absorb, expanding while we dwell in its sacred precincts, becoming more hopeful, more in earnest, more loving and sympathetic. We may lay aside our burdens, put away our problems, for the time being, and so find rest from all striving, rest and peace for the soul.

Yet higher still, highest of all, most beautiful and most abounding in peace, although the most difficult to suggest, is that sublime presence, that enfolding love, that sustaining peace which we call Spirit. The Father is literally and truly present. No bounds and no barriers separate him from the soul. Oh, the joy of that ineffable communion, the deep, calm, abiding joy! What repose is ours in the love which sustains us, what guidance, what

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insight, what strength! The universe seems at our command. All powers and orders of being are centralised where we abide. The soul listens, peers far forward and out over the surface of things, is given an instant's glimpse of the organisation which holds all things and beings together, then withdraws to its problems and its undeveloped lower life, that it may carry those problems and that life a stage farther in the outward manifestation of these sublime insights.

Henceforth, the soul really knows that the Spirit exists, that there is a spiritual world where individual souls eternally dwell. There is no need of argument. The usual discussions and manifestations of spiritism seem low and foreign in the extreme. That is direct, central, sure; these are derived, superficial, more or less subject to doubt. While the vision lasts, all is perfectly clear. It is only when the vision ceases that the realisation of it seems difficult, the evidences of it wholly intangible, its interpretation to others almost impossible.

Personal preparation for the future life is, however, only one aspect of our doctrine. Two or more congenial souls may attain a high level together. There is a higher law of love than the love of the flesh. It is the discovery, while we are still on earth, of the soul's affinity, which draws together those who live on the same plane, regardless of space.

Souls that really know each other here, those whose love has conquered the flesh, so that it is the spiritual presence, not the body, which comforts

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and cheers, need not be separated by the change miscalled death. This mutual attainment of the soul-plane is surely a greater accomplishment than to attain it alone. It makes spirituality social. It proves it to be still a part of the total, many-sided human life which makes for organic perfection. It is the mastery over the exclusiveness which sometimes characterises the attitude of seekers after the spiritual life. And what a noble ideal, what possibilities of mutual helpfulness and happiness it suggests, this transcendence of the flesh, where soul knows soul, where it feels and loves and is felt and loved by the fellow-soul!

Yet must we stop here? May not our range of soul affinities be extended, so that we shall hold communion with many of those nearest us who have gone forward to the freer life? From the point of view of a spiritual philosophy of life, there is surely no reason why souls should not return. If the soul is the real centre of power and possesses finer senses, a percipient and active spiritual organism which it bears away with it when it leaves this life, it must be able to act upon and to express itself to other souls far more successfully than when here. Of course, one must allow time for the transition and for adjustment to a new environment. But, that granted, why should not these freer souls make their thoughts and feelings known through the perceptive organisms of those still in the flesh, not through mediumship, but by direct transfer of thought and spiritual power?

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If this can be done, the critic asks why such messages are not frequently received? The answer, already suggested in a previous chapter, is that it is probably easy for the freed soul to send out its thought or spirit, but very difficult for those in the flesh to perceive it. We are too active. We are still absorbed in our dream life; and it is difficult for outside thoughts to find an entrance, although it is very probable that many thoughts are unconsciously received from this source. Again, it is very difficult to distinguish between a real spiritual message and our own expectation or suggestion.

I once carried on a series of telepathic experiments with a young man of marked psychic power. For a while the results were very satisfactory; and we not only transmitted thoughts, but also distinct mental pictures, such as faces of people whom we knew. But after a time our minds became so accustomed to these particular experiments that, despite our wills, the mind would quickly suggest some thought or picture before it could receive thoughts from the other mind. We found it almost impossible to maintain entire receptivity, even for a moment, so ready was the mind to anticipate the familiar experiments.

And so, in regard to real messages from our friends who have gone beyond. The mind tends to simulate them, and make receptivity very difficult of attainment. If one seems to feel a spiritual presence, a cool breath upon the brow, or if one apparently beholds a face in the darkness, it is very easy

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to make it speak, and so deceive one's self. The earnest investigator must be on his guard to avoid these subtle illusions.

Owing to these difficulties, it is better, as a rule, to leave all advances for the free or excarnate soul. It is inadvisable to call our friends back. They have their duties and occupations, and we should grant them full liberty. At the same time it is rational to believe that they can come to us if necessary.

It is well for sensitively organised souls to avoid reaching out to or thinking much of the next phase of existence. All these things will come in due time if we are moderate in our development. The difficulty usually is that we are too eager.

There is another reason for limiting these experiences; namely, the great thought which is my central theme in this chapter, the direct communion of the soul with the Spirit. If we devote the larger part of our spiritual life to growth in this highest direction, these minor phases of life will be rightly adjusted. We must choose whom we will serve. If the choice falls on this highest spiritual endeavour, the soul will surely move most directly toward the goal, toward normal, many-sided spiritual development and freedom.

The question is frequently asked in these days, Is bodily immortality possible? It may be possible, but it is doubtful if it be desirable; for, if the next phase of life be freer, richer, more spiritual, why should we not enter that life in due course?

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At the same time it is desirable to prolong the present existence until we shall have derived the full benefit from it. Many people pass out of this life because they are killed by powerful drugs. Many leave because of their fears, or because in a fit of despondency they desire to die. There is positive evidence that some at least have the power to postpone or hasten their going by an act of will. I once had an opportunity to observe, during many months, a case where death was frequently warded off while there was a strong desire to live, but finally hastened so that great suffering ensued, when the person in question thought the time had come when she "might as well die."

A lady friend informed me that twice in her life she had been so ill, and so nearly out of the body, that it rested with her to snap a thread, as it were, to decide whether the moving to go was stronger than the call to stay.

Again, death might be averted in thousands of cases by the right understanding. Those who have arrived at the plane of spiritual self-help, and those who know what their sensations mean, are able to pass through acute experiences which would be sufficient to send the untrained soul out of the body. If the fears be kept down, and a calm, even state of mind be maintained, one can pass through almost any experience, and retain one's physical hold of life. It is pitiful to think how many pass out of this life because of ignorance of these great truths.

It is also possible to prolong life by studying the

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intimate relationship of mind and matter, by learning to control the physical forces and the nerves. Many physical aids may be called in to assist the process of developing and retaining perfect health. For example, regular physical exercise, the proper care of the body, proper foods, and a simple, pure life. It is the rushing, nervous, heated, sensuous life that kills.

I mention these physical methods first, because of their value in connection with the spiritual methods; and, second, because they are wofully neglected. Man lives an animal or nervous life, then complains because he is ill and subject to death. He expects and hopes to reach old age, yet is unwilling to observe the conditions of equanimity and equilibrium which render long life possible. He must reform his habits if he wishes to be long-lived and healthy. He must adopt the ideal of perpetual youth, and permit no day to pass without its activity and care with that end in view. He must not only keep young in spirit, but keep the body young.

Disease can be wholly overcome! It rests with man to destroy it, if he approaches the problem on both its mental and physical sides. Disease once mastered, the race can begin a thoroughly healthy study of the mind, its powers of controlling the physical system and of transmitting thought. The healthy mind can then turn toward the spiritual world with wonderfully increased psychic power.

When this purer, wiser phase of life, equanimity, mental and physical health, shall be attained, man

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will undoubtedly live much longer, perhaps to the age of several hundred years. But under these conditions his life will become more refined and spiritual. He will gradually disappear from the eyes of physical man, although still retaining a form; that is, a more refined form.

It seems rational to believe that the soul has an invisible body which is in process of growth even while the soul resides in the flesh. If the law of evolution applies in the spiritual realm, sufficient time must be allowed for the growth of this finer body; and, as the soul does not step suddenly into perfect spiritual existence, this development must precede the change called death, at least in instances where there is some degree of soul-knowledge.

From the time of the dawning of soul-activity, there is evidently a gradual awakening and development of the spiritual life within and superior to the physical life. Every fresh spiritual discovery in regard to ourselves, every spiritual deed, is an advance in that direction. Our poise, our self-control, our love at its best, is of the soul. If we were wise enough, and had conquered all disease, life would be a gradual unfolding, like the maturing of a flower, so that, when the right time should come, the soul would blossom out into the next life unimpeded and painlessly.

Victory over death therefore means the conquering of all those conditions by which man brings it upon himself, through ignorance, fear, disease, excess, and a sensuous life. The victory is progressive:

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it begins the moment man transfers his consciousness from the flesh to the soul. The soul can conquer the flesh. As rapidly as it conquers, it becomes free. And, as it becomes free, it builds about itself a new body, a finer substance, a finer mode of vibration in the ether than that called material. When it shall have fully conquered, all life will be spiritually understood, and what once was called death will be seen to be but one among thousands of transitions from lower to higher. What seems death on a lower plane is seen as birth from the higher. There is apparent cessation of life only while we are immersed in the process. There is only immortality from the point of view of the higher law.

The essential thought, then, is that life is continuous, that because of our organic many-sidedness we already live in eternity, and need not travel beyond our physical home to find what is real, what is enduring, what is worth while. To realise this great thought, it is necessary to put the mind through a gradual process of transfer of interest and consciousness from the transient to the permanent, from the outer to the inner, from the visible to the invisible. Think of the soul as the life principle, as possessing the life. Think of it as a part of the timeless, spaceless world where, for all we know, life never begins and never ends. Think of it as your true self, as that part of you which you really care for, as that which you love in other people. Become more and more superior to time and place,

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less annoyed by the happenings and inconveniences of the world of place and time. Let it matter less and less what you do, so long as it is inspired from the soul. And so live in the soul, live from the soul, give of your soul, call out the soul in others.

Disabuse the mind of all thought of death as commonly understood, and look upon the change as an external incident. Think of the soul, and rejoice in the fuller freedom of the soul of those who have passed beyond, thus ridding the mind of the conventional ideas of sorrow and separation.

Is this thought of the continuous life sufficient to sustain the sorrowing heart, so that it may pass through any separation from loved ones, yet maintain its strength? Yes, this general attitude of mind tends to invite the strength which will sustain the soul when it is too weak to strengthen itself. Nothing is more beautiful than the manifestation of the Spirit at the time of the great transition, when the thought of all present is that of the continuous life. There is an unusual manifestation of the sustaining Presence and Love at such a time. It is one of the greatest opportunities for spiritual faith and receptivity. It is one of the supreme tests of life. The manner in which some enlightened souls have met this great experience is, in the opinion of their friends, the best evidence of the truth and power of their doctrine.

It is such a test of faith which translates theory into practice, mere talk about something into the reality itself. The soul bears away a new power.

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Henceforth it knows whereof it speaks, and is greatly superior in power and sympathy to those who are trying to persuade people that all trust can be acquired through mere perception, without the ministry of suffering.

It is because of the deep reality of these soul experiences that I pass by most of the arguments against immortality. One cannot prove immortality.[1] The immortal life is the only proof. It is less an affair of argument and more an affair of experience than most questions. Therefore, I shall close this discussion with only a brief consideration of the objections from the physical side.

These objections are one and all based, I take it, upon some assumption about reality. Over against these physical assumptions I place, as every whit as good, the sense of reality of those whose point of view is the existence of a spiritual soul. If these deepest inner experiences be unreal, it is time to question the reality of every experience in life.

The realities of the inner world have the advantage of being nearer to us. They are affairs of consciousness, to be sure, but so are all the experiences and relations of life, when fundamentally considered; for, in the ultimate analysis, it is all a question of differing planes of organic consciousness.

If, then, the spiritual plane of consciousness is

[1] To some it may seem that spirit manifestations are a proof. But psychic communication, if proved, only establishes the fact of continued existence; it does not leap beyond the experimental ideal and prove that souls are to live for ever.

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the highest, the freest, fullest of happiness and peace, we have every reason to cling to that as the most real; and so far as our power of choice may be influential, we have the strongest reason for willing that the spiritual consciousness shall, if any, be immortal.

Some may not desire immortality, and may think it burdensome to contemplate untold ages of existence. But the healthy mind rejoices in life, and wants to live. It is of minor consequence that in a few cases the desire is contrary to the deep longing for continuous existence which many feel.

From every point of approach we are able to guard our belief in immortality, so long as we remain true to the highest sentiments of the soul. If some are unaware of those experiences, it is evidently because they have not yet been quickened on the spiritual plane. From their point of view, our entire mental life is conditioned by its accompanying physical phenomena. Immersed in the physical brain, and engaged in the study of physical states, their thought naturally partakes of their occupation. To them thinking is purely a cerebral affair. Consequently, they cannot yet conceive of the existence of a soul without a cerebrum.

The question may be asked, Is there any evidence that we shall be able to think and to remember when the soul has been separated from its physical organ of thought? The evidence is the same that I have offered throughout, namely, that in the deeper analyses the soul, and not the brain, is found

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to be the centre of thought, feeling, and activity. The brain is the organ of perception and transmission.[1] It is the soul that perceives, wills, and acts.

For example, the brain cannot learn to walk or to talk. It is the soul of the child which conceives the idea of walking or talking. The brain is acted upon, and made to acquire the habits which thereafter subconsciously regulate the child's walking and talking.

As a wise man has said, it is almost as difficult to conceive the existence of the soul in possession of a physical brain as to understand how it can live without it.[2] In any case, it is in part a mystery. In view of this fact, that we do not fully know what thought is, would it not be a tremendous assumption to affirm that, when the physical brain dies, all thinking must cease?

Our future thinking may possess different characteristics, it is true. When the soul leaves the body, it may lose its physical habits, and the feelings associated with their performance through the physical brain, yet carry with it the power to acquire new habits in the spiritual life. Thinking, perceiving, and acting are less physical in proportion as they are separated from physical movements, and the faculties of the soul become active. The physical man may think largely with his brain; but the

[1] See Professor James, *Human Immortality*, p. 15. Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., 1898.

[2] Martineau, *Endeavors After the Christian Life*, p. 110. A. U. A. edition, Boston, 1888.

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spiritual man thinks through and beyond his brain until he learns to control it, and transcend physical sensation. He depends more and more upon spiritual intuition.

As for memory, if any part of our character survives, memory must survive with it. There would be a break in the continuity of life and of evolution, a dropping back, if the actor survived without remembrance of how he acted as this particular individual. It is when the physical body is out of the way, in the dreamless life, that the soul can truly perceive what it is and what it has done. It may not reason by the slow processes of the flesh-bound soul. But the direct vision of things, which is sure to come when it begins to be at home in the spiritual world, will undoubtedly include all that our intellects now know and very much more. A new phase will thus be added to our experimental life, and new material furnished for philosophical thought.

Memory is not an affair of cerebral impressions alone. It is part and parcel of our nature. Our deeds become a part of us: they make us for good or ill. By the eternal law of cause and effect we cannot escape them. That law must hold true of the new life, or it is not a law at all, and is not binding even here. We must begin life there where we left it here. There are no sudden leaps in evolution, except in cases where evolution has prepared for them, as in the bursting of the bud, which I have compared to the blossoming of the soul.

In the eternal order of things we stand for what

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we are worth as souls. What we are worth as souls the future will reveal, by drawing conditions corresponding to the state of development with which we enter the next phase of life. It is the spiritual character or consciousness that avails. Consequently, the desideratum is to come to judgment here, that we may honestly know where we stand.

All may be summarised under the head of spiritual consciousness, the knowledge and self-control, the love and peace and poise each may possess here and now. Thus our doctrine becomes purely practical, namely, to live in continual consciousness of the soul-life out of which the freer spiritual existence shall be in due time developed. It is of more consequence to live from the soul, to live close to the Father, than to exist for ever. This may be a mere platitude; but it is, after all, the most practical aspect of the question, so apt are we to anticipate, to pry into the future, when the wise present should be our concern. One might almost summarise the doctrine by saying, Live deeply enough in the present and you shall find immortality. "The eternal life is not the future life," says Amiel: "it is life in harmony with the true order of things,—life in God." The deep life of the present is the deep life in the Spirit who owns all time. Seek him, seek the Spirit, and all that is just and wise will follow. If eternal life comes, it will be because the Spirit needs us. If it do not come, our career will end only when the Father's work through us is done. He who is superior to the personal desire for it, who

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is willing to lose himself, is most likely to win immortality, if it is in any sense to be had for the winning.

For it is the Christ-spirit that bringeth eternal life to light, and that spirit comes in its fulness only when man is most absorbed in the great work of the universe and least concerned for himself. In the far inward world of the soul, that pure spirit speaketh. It comes to bless. It comes to sustain, to inspire, and to restore. He who lowly listens there shall hear its gentle messages. He who is faithful to these promptings need not give the future an anxious thought. Receptivity, trust, and co-operation, these are the three essentials from the human side. They prepare the way for all that the race has need of. They bring all that any man deserves.

"When my time comes, may I so gently pass
I shall not stir this life-round wonderful,
Like flicker of soft wind o'er summer grass
Or dip of pebble dropped in some deep pool.

. . . . . .

"Lament me not, belovèd, shed no tear
Because of cession of the finite powers;
Lay only happy thoughts upon my bier,
And hope and love, which are immortal flowers.

"Knowing I have departed not, but thus
Do but assume a finer medium
To make a little space more luminous.
For thy dear feet to tread when thou dost come."

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